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**The Effects On Staff Morale
Of A Change Of Leadership
And Period Of Industrial Dispute
In A Secondary School**

A Ph.D. Thesis by

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CHAPTER 1

SETTING THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

Introduction

This thesis examines the nature of morale in a secondary school. It considers the way staff morale changed following a change of headteacher and a period of industrial action by teachers. It examines the way the change of headteacher and management style altered power relationships, and considers the effects of these changes on the staff. Some staff, who were adversely affected by the change in the school's power relationships, developed discernible patterns of estranged behaviour. Staff at all levels had dissonant expectations of the headteacher. Whilst they recognised that the role of the head had changed, they continued to expect the head to act in a traditional manner.

The period of industrial action of the 1980's significantly undermined teachers' self concept and adversely affected their morale. The action disrupted the developing management strategies that the new head was trying to introduce. It also accentuated the differences between sub-groups of staff. Senior staff and middle managers saw the actions of the head during the period of action very differently from the junior assistant staff.

The research attempts to demonstrate that morale is more complex than existing models suggest. It proposes that morale is affected by membership of different groups within an organisation, and the quality of leadership of those groups at both senior and middle management level. It is possible, therefore, to map the morale of different groups within an organisation.

Abstract

This thesis examines changes in staff morale in a secondary school following a change of headteacher and a period of industrial action by teachers.

The change of headteacher and management style altered power relationships. Staff who were adversely affected developed discernible patterns of estranged behaviour. Staff at all levels had dissonant expectations of the headteacher: changes in the head's role were acknowledged, but expectations of leadership remained traditional.

The period of industrial action significantly undermined the teachers' self concept and adversely affected their morale. The action disrupted developing management strategies and accentuated the differences between stratified sub-groups of staff: senior staff; middle managers; established assistant and junior assistant staff.

The research provides a framework for analysis of group morale, which extends work by Williams (1984) to demonstrate that morale is more complex than existing models suggest. Morale is affected by membership of different groups within an organisation, and the quality of leadership of those groups at both senior and middle management level. It is possible, therefore, to map the morale of different groups within an organisation.

Data was collected using observation, interviews, conversation, questionnaires and school documentation. The researcher claims a position of "privileged" observer: an experienced fellow professional used to participating in the environment being researched. Strengths and weaknesses of this "privileged" status are examined in relation to the traditional ethnographic role of a "participant" observer.

The research draws on the findings of Lyons, Stenning & McQueeney (1983) and Bolam, McMahon, Pocklington and Weindling (1993) on teachers' preferred management style; Ball (1987) on micro-political conflict in schools. It confirms the analyses by Richardson (1973) on sentience in school management and Nias (1989) on the importance of the self concept and reference groups for teachers.

Chapter 1: Setting the Research Context

The first four chapters set the research context and review the literature. Chapter 5 reviews the existing work on morale and proposes a new way of examining the morale of different elements of an organisation by adapting the work of Williams (1984).

Chapters 6 to 14 report the evidence provided by the data at Hillside School. Chapter 6 explores the effects of a change of headteacher, and leadership style, on the school and its effect on staff at all levels in the school structure. Chapter 7 considers the value and relevance of developing a common set of aims and objectives as a method of developing a sense of purpose amongst the teaching staff. Chapters 8-11 examine the way school policy is formulated, and the extent of staff influence on policy-making. Chapter 12 considers the way leaders at senior and middle management level affect the morale of the staff within their teams. It examines the different factors that lead to the development of high or low morale within the school as a whole, and within different teams within the school. Chapter 13 reviews the way different aspects of school management affect morale in the context of meetings, decision-making, staff development and welfare, and staff social cohesion.

Chapter 14 marks a change in perspective. The industrial action by teachers in the 1980s affected the research significantly. Data collection was disrupted, and the attitudes of staff hardened as they took up more entrenched positions. Having reviewed the data, and analysed it to gain an understanding of the influences that affected the morale of individuals and teams within a school, this chapter explores the increasing influence of external factors on the school, and their effects on the changing role of the headteacher. Teachers' dissonant expectations of a headteacher are explored. The chapter then discusses whether the model of an idealised headteacher is a realisable one in the context of the changes in education generated

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by changes in national education policy. It examines the effects of these changes on the leadership and management of schools, and the nature of headship.

Chapter 15 rests on the research reported in Chapters 6 to 14. It proposes that the stratification of staff in school, and their different levels of access to the headteacher and to centres of power within the organisation, has a fundamental relevance to the level of morale of individual teachers. It proposes that the adoption of certain management styles are likely to enhance morale, while others can affect morale adversely. The thesis explores the concept of estrangement of staff, and the likely consequences of estranged behaviour within the context of changes in morale.

Setting up the research

In 1982, I obtained the consent of Hillside School to carry out research into the effect of a change of head on the staff of the school. The new head, David Thomas, wanted to develop a new, more participative style of management in the school. He saw this process operating through greater involvement of staff in the decision-making process, through middle management and staff meetings. The research would examine the way the change in style affected the staff's morale over a period of four years between 1982, when the research commenced, and 1986, when the last interviews were concluded. By using questionnaires, interviews and by observing management meetings, I expected to be able to obtain a balanced view of the way the policies and decisions of the school's management team were translated into action. I also wanted to record the way the staff responded to the changes. The research methods and my role are discussed more fully in Chapter 4.

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The research had quite clearly defined boundaries. Its focus was on staff attitudes and relationships. It did not include students and their experience of the school, and the views of parents, governors and the LEA were not sought. The effect of management on staff attitudes and morale, during a time of change, was the primary focus of this research.

Industrial Action

The project began in 1982, two years after David Thomas, the head teacher, had taken up his appointment. (All names used in this research are pseudonyms.) The proposed plan of research is shown in Timeline 1.

Timeline 1	
July 1979	John Robinson leaves Hillside
April 1980	David Thomas takes up headship
May 1982	Research project agreed
October 1982	First questionnaires issued
June- November 1983	First series of interviews
October 1984	Second questionnaires issued
October 1985- March 1986	Second series of interviews

However, events interfered with this timetable. The 1980s were characterised by a significant change in industrial relations in secondary schools. The climate in education changed dramatically, with teachers' associations instructing their members to work to contract. The industrial action generated considerable bitterness at Hillside, an issue examined more fully in Chapter 14. More immediately, the onset of the action completely changed my research plans. I had completed the mailing of the first round of questionnaires, and was about to start the first round of interviews when the action started. I had been attending meetings for 6 terms. Once

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the action started, the management meetings did not take place. They were a key source of research data, and their cancellation caused me (and the school) considerable problems. Timeline 2 shows the disruption the teacher action caused to the research.

Timeline 2	
July 1979	John Robinson leaves Hillside
April 1980	David Thomas takes up headship
May 1982	Research project agreed
October 1982	First questionnaires issued
June- November 1983	First series of interviews
January 1984	Spending cuts affect Hillside
April-July 1984	First period of teacher action
October 1984	Second questionnaires issued
December 1984- January 1986	Second period of teacher action
October 1985- March 1986	Second series of interviews

During the planned four years of data collection, teacher action prevented the observation of meetings for a total of 17 months. The effects of the action coloured staff attitudes to the government, the LEA and almost all aspects of the school's management.

The development of the new head's management style was affected by the action. His attempts to develop participative management foundered because the staff would not attend management meetings. His attempts to continue to consult staff despite the action were rebuffed, and consultation at an official level ceased between April and July 1984, and again between December 1984 and January 1986. However, it quickly became apparent that the

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industrial dispute actually provided a great opportunity to study its effect on changes in management and staff morale at close quarters, despite the difficulties that it caused.

Problems stemming from the action

My methodology could adapt to the new circumstances fairly well, though the cancellation of meetings had an effect on the time I spent in the school. Assistant staff left the school promptly at the end of the day, and therefore were not available for informal interview. The dispute caused a number of other problems. The most significant was attempting to tease out what was happening in the school and account for it. It became difficult to identify the causes of problems. They might be due to decisions by the school's management, the direct consequences of government action, or the result of LEA guidelines to head teachers about how they were to manage the dispute. In the same way, it was difficult to decide whether staff reactions to management decisions were reactions to the head and his management style, or expressions of frustration with the government or the LEA. My interviews addressed these issues, but the progress of the dispute changed staff perceptions from day to day and week to week as the dispute progressed. The dispute also changed my own perceptions. The simple relationship I had initially expected to focus on, between school policy-making and staff morale, was revealed as a significantly more complex web of relationships that needed careful unravelling.

Morale

The onset of action had an immediate effect on the staff's morale. This issue is discussed more fully in Chapter 14. My research was thrown suddenly into a different, sharper focus. The focus changed from a study of the effect of a new style of management on morale, to a study of the effect of industrial action on staff morale at all levels. As the industrial action stemmed

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from political decisions by the government, this development allowed me to add another context to my study. It provided an area of conflict that was outside the headteacher's control, but provided a problem that he was still required to manage.

Reporting back

The dispute created great bitterness throughout the profession and in many schools (Lyons, Stenning & McQueeney 1983). Hillside was no exception. As the action developed, relationships within the school became increasingly strained, not just between assistant staff and management, but also between members of different professional associations. Staff were frequently forthright in their opinions expressed to me in interviews, but the nature of their responses also created another difficulty for me. Reporting back in a balanced way, when staff were so outspokenly critical in a personal and professional context was extremely difficult. The work was set aside for a period of several years to allow time to cool the material and give a different perspective. In some cases, information collected in interviews was too personal or challenging to be used in this thesis.

In summary

The original plan of research intended to examine the effect of the changes in management on staff morale. The first two years of the research project recorded staff's views of the way they would prefer to be managed, and the qualities in managers that are important to them. The dispute sharpened the focus of these observations, but did not appear to change them fundamentally: staff wanted to feel valued and involved in the management and policy-making of the school.

Chapter 1: Setting the Research Context

The industrial action in 1984 and 1985 prevented my research proceeding as originally planned, but provided a great opportunity to examine a school whilst the dispute progressed. From 1984 the context and circumstances were altered radically, and a new perspective established. The way in which the head managed the staff changed during the dispute. The latter part of the research examines staff morale in this context.

CHAPTER 2

THE GENERAL RESEARCH STRATEGY

Introduction

This chapter discusses the main research methodologies that may be appropriate for a single school case study.

What is ethnography?

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) give an overview of the developments in ethnographic research methods. They discuss the limitations and strengths of this methodological approach in relation to the other main traditions in social research. Ethnography, they say, draws on a wide range of sources of information. The ethnographer participates overtly or covertly in people's daily lives for an extended period of time. S/he watches what happens, listens to what is said and asks questions. S/he collects whatever data is available to throw light on the issues s/he is concerned with. This is essentially the role of the participant observer. Banister et al. (1994) write from the perspective of medical researchers. They place ethnography and participant observation in a wider framework of qualitative research methods where the focus is on the context and integrity of the material. It is the interpretative study of a specific issue or problem in which the researcher is central to the sense that is made.

Problems with ethnography

Hammersley and Atkinson say that ethnography can be criticised for subjectivity. Ethnography records idiosyncratic impressions that cannot provide a solid foundation for rigorous scientific analysis. On the other hand, "artificial" methods such as experiments and survey interviews are incapable of capturing the meaning of every day human activities. Banister et al. (1994) echo

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the criticisms of ethnographic methods made by Hammersley and Atkinson. They suggest that qualitative research takes as its starting point the awareness of the gap between an object of study and the way we represent it. Interpretation fills the gap; is a bridge between objects and representations of them; a process that continues as our relation to the world and to the data keeps changing. They conclude that qualitative research raises some problems of evaluation. They propose that ethnography is not looking for the deductive, positivist answers: it is about examining the way in which the data create a picture, and explaining that picture, rather than prescribing universal laws. A wider application of the results of ethnographic study can only come from the development of a body of similar research that reach broadly similar conclusions.

Positivism & Naturalism

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) and Banister et al. (1994) discuss the alternative methodologies of positivism and naturalism, and suggest that positivism attaches importance to experiments and survey research and quantitative analysis of data; based upon the logic of research in physical science. Positivism seeks to explain through universal laws and deductive logic from a neutral observational standpoint and language. It is closely based on scientific method, and scientific experiments that can be tested and replicated.

I am not sure that I fully agree with this view of positivist methodology. Application of scientific method to prove or disprove a hypothesis may indeed work in the way that Banister et al. suggest. I would argue that open ended scientific enquiry, carried out on the basis of observation - the “let’s see what happens if,” approach - is not radically different from the methodology of the naturalists or ethnographers. All are looking for patterns and possible hypotheses that are generated by their observation. The chief difference comes in the way the

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different research methodologies seek to interpret their results. Positivists are more likely to look for universal applications of their work, whereas ethnographers and naturalists realise that their more individualised studies are unlikely to have immediate universal application. Laboratory experiments can be managed so that the number of variables can be reduced to a much greater extent than is possible in social-based research. The possibility of generalising from the results is, therefore, much greater. The problem that arises from attempts to use positivist methodology in a social context stems from the essential impossibility of controlling all the variables. An alternative methodology that starts by recognising this problem seems more appropriate.

Naturalism argues that the social world should be studied in a natural state undisturbed by the researcher. This means no experiments or formal interviews: the emphasis is on natural, informal methods that show respect for the social world being observed. The social world cannot be subsumed in terms of causal relationships or universal laws. It is the way people interpret stimuli that shape their actions. People change in response to stimuli (including the researcher as a stimulus). The response is not consistent; behaviours change through time and circumstances. The researcher needs to understand the social meanings from the inside of the culture being studied. Establishing whether there are consistent patterns in people's responses is likely to be achieved through replication of research in different situations, rather than replicating the research in the same situation. Positivism and naturalism are both concerned with the activities of researchers and researched, and a desire to eliminate the effect of the researcher on the data. Positivists seek to eliminate it at the research procedure end. Naturalists try to turn the researcher into part of the data.

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Reflexivity

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) propose that the principle of reflexivity is essential in social research. They argue that reflexivity accepts that researchers have an effect on the phenomena that they study. Banister et al. (1994) describe reflexivity as the principle that the way we characterise a phenomenon changes our perception of it. They conclude that qualitative research does not pretend to fill all the gaps. Reflexivity acknowledges the gaps and works with them. They suggest that ethnography is concerned with experience as it is lived, felt or undergone: a concern with a phenomenological consciousness. Ethnographers participate actively in the research environment but do not structure it. The approach is discovery based; the aim being to depict the activities and perspectives of the actors. Procedures usually include observation, participant observation, interviews and questions. They argue that the "position of the researcher" affects the definition of the problem to be studied and the way he/she interacts with the material to produce a particular type of sense. All observations are interpreted when they are reported. Writing down the observation changes it.

Understanding the data: Grounded theory & Progressive focusing

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) suggest that problems with research methods and data are often opportunities to understand the data. The researcher experiments with hypothetical explanations of data. Theories that explain the behaviour of the researched should also throw light on the researcher and help him/her to develop their methodology. They propose that ethnographic researchers should check their understanding of the phenomena under study and depict the perspectives and activities in a clear setting. Ethnography is a flexible tool that investigates social processes in everyday settings, using multiple data sources to make triangulation of the data possible. They describe how ethnography should develop theory as research progresses, reflecting the grounded theory approach of Glaser and Strauss (1967).

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The research problem is described or transformed by progressive focusing and eventually its scope is clarified and delineated and its internal structure explored. In this sense it is frequently only over the course of the research that one discovers what the research is actually "about". It is not uncommon for the research to be about something quite remote from the initial foreshadowed problems. Progressive focusing may also involve a gradual shift from a concern with describing social events and processes to developing and testing explanations for them. This has been the case in my research at Hillside. Progressive focusing moved the research from general considerations of management style, and its effect on morale in a general way, to a much more sharply focused analysis of the effects of industrial action on the morale of staff. Banister et al. (1994) argue that the focus of the research affects the methodology and the evaluation. They suggest that the standpoint of the researcher is partly shaped by the methodology, partly by the attitude of the host school, and partly by the way the researcher has to adapt his/her research to use the results obtained, or risk bending the results to fit the methodology chosen. It is also affected by the extent and nature of the evidence base and the analysis and treatment of the data.

Case studies

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) suggest that in a case study, the representative nature of the results is open to question. Case studies cannot claim to have discovered universal laws. The findings of my research at Hillside represent a specific view of a particular school at a particular stage in its history. My research does not claim to have universal application. It would need to be compared with other case studies of similar institutions to see if the findings were in any way similar.

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Reporting

Banister et al. (1994) recognise that the reporting of research can be affected by the methodology. Traditional quantitative (positivist) research demanded a conventional writing style that was distant and impartial, though attitudes to reporting styles now seem have changed. There is a strong argument that ethnography should be very much like narrative writing, with an emphasis on theme and illustration: essential to make clear the pattern of events and the researcher's understanding. This produces qualitative data that gives inside and detailed information.

The merits of Ethnography

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) argue that ethnography represents one research method among others. It has some very definite advantages over other methods and can be used at any phase of the process of social enquiry. It generates descriptive accounts that are valuable in their own right and it also greatly facilitates the process of theory construction. The diversity of the data sources allows triangulation, enabling some checks on, and perhaps control over, the effects of various aspects of the research process on the data. It has important limitations: it cannot be used to study past events, though the importance of the recent history of Hillside under a very different head was certainly a factor in my own research. Its ability to discriminate between rival hypotheses is weak, and it is poor when trying to deal with large scale organisations. The method helps the development of theory and understanding, and tests them within a single institution. Establishing a wider validity for a theory can only be done through a comparison of a range of case studies, to establish if the same general patterns on response are found.

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The Hillside Research

My Hillside Research uses qualitative methods, without being ethnography in the full sense. It faced a number of the methodological problems that have been discussed above. The Hillside research uses the data collection techniques of interview, questionnaire, observation, conversation and data analysis from the standpoint of a privileged observer. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) point out, access to data can be a great problem. The commitment to confidentiality that was a part of the condition of access to Hillside School has been a significant difficulty throughout my research.

The process of refining and redefining the research focus, and the difficulties of finding the right questions to ask in a changing situation were parts of this process as well. The reflexive process was significant in modifying and remodelling the focus of the research in a changing situation. Their conclusion, that all knowledge is constructed on the basis of available evidence, and therefore fallible, also helps identify a problem with my research at Hillside. The level of co-operation from a significant number of staff was enormous. However there were staff who were unwilling or unable to participate, and others who left during the research process, who only gave a partial account of their view.

My research also recognises the point that Banister et al. (1994) make: that ethnographic methods are tools used in an attempt to capture the truth within a situation, and interpret and illuminate it. It provides one example of human behaviour in a particular set of circumstances. Studies by other researchers (Pietrasik, 1987, etc.) tend to support the general findings of this research. They exemplify Hammersley and Atkinson's (1983) view that taking a number of studies together that suggest similar conclusions can give some confidence that the views and theories are well founded, though not providing absolute proof.

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My position was not fully ethnographic. I was not a participant observer of the school, as I was not employed at Hillside. My position was that of a **privileged observer**, in two senses. Firstly, there was the general sense of privilege that comes from being a fellow professional, actively involved in teaching, and with a mature experience. Secondly, through my knowledge of the particular school, and my involvement with many of the staff, I was in a position to interpret the unfolding events from a position of insight and experience. I had been closely associated with the school for a number of years, through personal contacts with a number of staff who became my key informants (Cf. Woods 1979).

This privileged position caused a number of problems that I discuss in more detail in Chapter 4. One difficulty was reporting back to the school. My original intention of continuous feedback worked well before the industrial action began. I was able to talk to staff about what I was discovering, and seek their comments on my progress. I made it a practice to discuss interviews with interviewees a few days after the interview, and ask if they wished to add anything to what they had had to say. Almost invariably, staff said that they had meant what they said. They had thought carefully about what they said in their interviews, and did not wish to retract or modify any of their comments. I also discussed the events that I observed in meetings with staff, particularly my key informants, either after the meeting ended, or on the next occasion I visited the school.

Once the action started, the process of continuous feedback became less effective. I was not meeting a range of staff at Hillside, and was not able to reflect on my findings with them as fully as I would have liked. Moreover, the polarisation of the staff, discussed in greater detail in Chapter 14, affected the consensus view. I accommodated this change in circumstances by starting each of the interviews during the teacher action with a general conversation about how

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the school was operating. I discussed what my research was telling me about the school and in that way sought confirmation of the evidence I was obtaining from other sources (Cf. Lee 1993; Maguire 1994).

Once the data collection was finished, and the writing up process under way, it became apparent that I could not take the draft chapters back to the school for discussion. The data collection ended as Kenneth Baker imposed the settlement on teachers in 1986. Nerves were still raw, and the fracturing of the staff consensus was still a problem. My own involvement in the emotions of the staff at the time made objective reporting difficult. My solution was to timelock the data for several years. This gave time for passions to cool, which enabled me to approach the material in a more detached way, and present a more balanced and objective account of the events at Hillside.

CHAPTER 3

THE METHODOLOGY OF SINGLE SCHOOL STUDIES

Introduction

This chapter considers the methodology of other researchers who have conducted single school studies. *Social Relations in a Secondary School* (Hargreaves 1967) and *Hightown Grammar* (Lacey 1970) both helped show me the way. *Classrooms Observed* (Nash 1973) helped identify some methodological issues. *The Divided School* (Woods 1979) was also very useful, as was *Beachside Comprehensive* (Ball 1981). The subsequent paper, *Beachside Revisited* (Ball 1982), discussing the pitfalls he had experienced with the publication of his research, was especially useful. *Schooling Ordinary Kids* (Brown 1987) provided some useful ideas about the use of different data collection techniques and their reporting. *The Teacher, The School and the Task of Management* (Richardson 1973) was a key influence on my thinking. This section examines the methodological approach of these researchers in more detail.

Hargreaves: *Social Relations in the Secondary School* (1967)

Hargreaves focuses on the social system of the school, including basic social processes. He spent one year at the school; the first two terms present for the whole day, teaching and observing lessons. He used questionnaires, interviews, and every available opportunity for informal discussion with pupils including official visits, holidays and some out of school activities. He became a participant-observer armed with his own training and teaching experience with the intention of examining the behaviour and attitudes of the boys in school and their relationships with the teachers and one another.

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Hargreaves argues that behaviour is observable and recordable. He suggests that it is straight forward to say, “I saw this,” or, “I saw that.” His research can, in that sense, be said to be objective or empirical. The underlying attitudes that Hargreaves explored are much less simple to explain. He attempts to explain the processes behind the actions, and here the researcher is on less secure ground. He describes his research process as relatively unstructured and fraught with difficulties and dangers.

He makes the point that it is difficult to describe human behaviour without appearing to make judgements on the actors involved, and the terms used seem very subjective and value loaded. One can describe what one sees without adding judgement; it is only when one tries to interpret what one has seen that judgements creep in. The question then becomes not “What did he do?” so much as, “Why did he do that? Did he mean to do that?”

Hargreaves, then, identifies three problems for the researcher. He suggests that the researcher needs to be selective in the choice of subject group so that the research is contained within manageable boundaries. He argues that there is a difference between empirical, observable behaviour that constitutes evidence, and coming to an understanding of the attitudes that underlie the observed behaviour. He also points out that there are difficulties in writing the research, and making it real by using the words of the interviewees, rather than presenting a simple narration of observed incidents.

In his appendix, Hargreaves describes Participant Observation and Role Conflict. He suggests that the validation of participant observation is in part a matter of determining, wherever possible, the reliability of the material obtained. The extent to which the participant observer disturbs the situation he investigates, and the extent of the limitations imposed by accepting a role within that situation, lead not only to the uncovering of information that may be

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inaccessible by other methods, but also to deficiencies and difficulties that require elucidation. Participant observation leads the investigator to accept a role within the social situation he studies; he participates as a member of the group as well as observing it. In theory this permits an easy entrance into the social situation by reducing the resistance of the group members. It permits the investigator to experience, and observe the group's norms, values, conflicts and pressures that cannot be hidden from a participant observer who is playing an "In-Group" role.

Hargreaves had three years' teaching experience before he started his research. He felt that the nature of his research was never properly explained to the teachers prior to his arrival. The Head simply circulated a brief note to staff saying that a sociologist from the University would be coming to work in the school for a short period. My research at Hillside was fully explained to the staff. The head made it clear that the research could only go ahead with the consent of the majority of staff. However, the Head made no attempt to sway the staff's opinion. He adopted a low key and neutral stance that at the time I found difficult, but now appreciate was a deliberate attempt on his part to avoid putting staff under pressure over the decision.

Hargreaves experienced a duality of role. When he was an observer of lessons, he ceased to be regarded as a teacher, and his role became more that of an inspector. However, through constant participation in the informal social activities of the staff he believed he was largely able to shed the inspector's role, and he was drawn into informal activities. His need to participate over-rode the need for detached observation and could have led to friction that could have undermined the research. However, had he not participated in the conversation, and through it the social life of the teachers, he could not have become integrated into the staff group.

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The need to accept involvement was also a part of my research. The interview process demanded some measure of involvement to maintain the flow of information that was at the heart of the process, and my increasing involvement may have skewed the data. Hargreaves thought that most of the people being studied did not appreciate that many of the apparently trivial things they said or the confidences they related were of special significance. He suggests that, inevitably, this carried an element of deception: do you tell someone that what they have said is significant, and again break down the social acceptance. He describes this as a mutual personal adjustment of observer and subjects. One consequence was that teachers tended to say more than they originally intended, and certainly more than they would consider fit for the ears of someone they would perceive to be an external observer. The researcher has a duty to use only non-confidential evidence, or evidence the source of which can be effectively obscured, in a published report. This may mean that there are some aspects of the situation that cannot be published at all because of possible damage to confidentiality. The problems of confidentiality and ethics that Hargreaves describes have been a major issue in my research .

Lacey: *Hightown Grammar* (1970)

Lacey worked in Hightown Grammar for eighteen months, teaching half-timetable, and attempted to immerse himself in the life of the school, and in the community of which it formed a part. He found that the focus of the research changed as the research progressed. He justifies a case study approach by suggesting that its significance is not confined to the particularistic concerns of this one school. He suggests that the case study school should be viewed as a social system embedded in a wider society and is an intrinsic part of community life. He argues that the insights gained in this (grammar school) study should not be thought inapplicable to the new comprehensive system.

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Lacey conducted his research from the standpoint of participant observation, and though the main focus of his work was the achievement of pupils, he also observed the behaviour of teachers. He spent the first two months of his research getting to know the school and observed teachers giving lessons. He used the time to locate a number of strategic areas that would enable him to gain a clear picture of the processes taking place within the school.

My privileged position at Hillside allowed me to begin my research with the strategic areas already established in my own mind. One of the problems that Lacey describes, that affected me considerably, was the fact that a school is not an "unchanging and totally integrated equilibrium model". Lacey suggests that the focus of the research changed as the research progressed, again reflecting my own experience at Hillside

Nash: *Classrooms Observed* (1973)

Nash describes his research as having two parts. The first part was a preliminary and exploratory study, not one designed to test rigorously defined hypotheses, though he says he had certain loosely formulated guiding presumptions. He used Kelly's theory of personal constructs to reveal the way teachers perceived their pupils. He also made detailed observations of the inter-actions between students, and between students and teachers. He suggests that the only way participant observation can be a reliable research tool is if the observations conform to some rules of procedure, which he identifies as:

- i: knowing exactly what he is researching
- ii: keeping systematic notes and indexes

(p40)

In this way the researcher uses observation to try to validate a hypothesis.

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He spent four (sometimes five) days a week for a year in a primary school. He observed lessons and took occasional classes when teachers were absent, and felt he had no difficulty fitting in as he tended to be regarded as a student teacher.

The second part of his research was to follow a group of five classes through the transition from primary to secondary school, with particular attention paid to one class of 34 children. Here, his method was a combination of questionnaire and informal interview and an attempt to use a repertory grid analysis of teacher attitudes that unfortunately did not command the support of all the secondary teachers. He also observed the class's lessons at the primary and secondary stage, before and after transfer, and interviewed each student in the class prior to transfer. He suggests that most of the hypotheses that developed during the course of the work were confirmed. The research had at least one unexpected outcome about the importance of pupils' social origins, and some hypotheses were not borne out by results. This suggests that the positivist approach he was attempting to apply to participant observation did not work especially well, and perhaps a more ethnographic approach might have been more useful.

Woods: *The Divided School* (1979)

Woods suggests that in participant observation, problems, issues and kinds of interaction are not specified before the research begins. However it is not always easy to articulate reasons or identify the motives or intentions behind the interactions. He suggests this can only be done through participation. When the researcher becomes a participant, s/he proceeds by reflection and analogy, analysing his own reactions and motives as and when they occur during the process of which he is part. He tried to combine deep personal involvement and a measure of detachment. Without the latter he ran the risk of "going native."

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My research position was close to Woods, in that I too was readily accepted as a teacher on the basis of considerable experience in the profession. I was assumed to have an insight into the teacher's perspective. My experience allowed me to blend into Hillside without any great difficulty. I adopted a similar process of reflection and found the combination of personal involvement and detachment extremely difficult.

Woods suggests that the nature and degree of participation varies according to the aims of the research. He preferred to think of himself as an *involved observer* rather than a participant. The involvement was in the relationships entered into with staff and pupils, an identification with educative processes, and a willingness to go along with the perceptions of his role. He was seen variously as:

1. a relief agency or counsellor;
2. a secret agent;
3. a factor to be used or appealed to in power struggles;
4. a substitute member of staff;
5. a fellow human being.

(p261-263)

He was also involved through a shared experience of the role of teacher. This gave him some understanding of the teachers' agenda: one of the difficulties of participant observation is that you become overcome by the responsibilities of the job.

Much of the work was based on "naturalistic" or "behavioural" talk, that is talk heard and noted by the researcher.

Woods identifies three levels of access to the school:

1. carefully selected scenes;
2. the school with the window dressing removed;
3. the real inside of the school, accessed through a sense of trust.

(p263)

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He relied on *key informants* who helped give perspective to the entire methodological front from the very beginning, for example to identify the nature of other people's talk and behaviour. In this way it was possible to judge how consciously and seriously the views are held, and cross-check them with other sources of information.

Woods suggests that a danger in participant observation is that of *immersion*. The researcher becomes very involved in the scene, and finds himself explaining things in their own terms when the real reasons might lie elsewhere. He also faces the danger of *macro blindness*, which can lead to a failure to see the truth behind the observed behaviour because of too great a personal involvement, and blindness to wider external issues. The delay between data collection and writing the thesis has given me the opportunity to reflect on the work from a more objective perspective.

He suggests that participant observation is intensely individualistic. Many field studies give an impression of hit and run, gaining access to an institution, cracking its secrets and then running off to write the definitive version before the ethical problems catch up. My research has faced very significant ethical problems, which have been very difficult to resolve. Delaying the writing of the research for ten years has allowed time to add distance and objectivity to the research. Hillside School is now an entirely different institution. Many of the protagonists of this research have left, and the problems described are history.

Ball: *Beachside Comprehensive* (1981)

Ball provides a detailed study of a single co-educational comprehensive school. The central question of the book is how one can study the social mechanisms operating in a school and employ such knowledge to explain the disappointing performance of working class pupils. He

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asks the question: *What is going on here?* The study seeks to describe and understand the social system of the school in terms of the actors' interpretations of the situation. Analytically, the study addresses the task of placing the classroom perspectives and interactions of teachers and pupils within a wider social context, and does not rest solely upon the interpretation of teachers' and pupils' utterances. What is offered is an approximate reality, the experiences of a single researcher with all the problems of selection, chance and bias that entails: an historical snapshot of an institution in the process of change.

In comparison, in my thesis the interpretation of events at Hillside was an attempt to identify, understand and record the effect on morale of the process of change. The focus of the research may be different, but the intention of placing the interactions of teachers in a wider social context, and offering an approximation of reality, the historical snapshot, is the same.

Ball participated in the daily life of the school, by observing lessons and supply teaching. In the first year of fieldwork, he had four periods of timetabled teaching, and three periods of timetabled teaching in the second year. He also accompanied various visits, and took part in a range of other school activities. He was in school for three days each week during the first year and four days a week during the second year. In the third year his visits were occasional. He observed a large number of lessons, interviewed pupils and teachers, carried out several small scale questionnaire studies, sociometric and otherwise, and worked through and analysed school records and registers.

As with most case study research based on a methodology of participant observation, Ball suggests that the outcomes of his study did not lend themselves to conclusions in the terms of one or two carefully tested hypothesises, but rather to a set of inter-related propositions. He

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states he did not enter into his fieldwork with specific hypotheses to test or a rigidly predetermined research design. He had general issues in mind, and a theoretical framework that directed his attention to certain events in the field.

The question of where an interest in a general proposition becomes a set of hypotheses to test is difficult to determine. I began the Hillside research with an underlying interest in the way change would affect the staff's morale. To focus the research more precisely involved identifying one or two specific issues, such as the way the management of meetings and information affected the staff's sense of involvement, or the accessibility of the head to different staff strata. I did not plan the research to find out what effects industrial action had on school management and staff morale. That was one of those unlooked-for events that can occur in all research, and an essential element of reflexivity is that the issues under investigation can be redefined and refined. The outcomes for Hillside led towards an attempt to define the way staff feel about the way they are managed, and some consideration about how management styles can affect staff morale.

Ball: *Beachside Reconsidered* (1982)

In this very interesting description of his post-research problems, Ball suggests that methodological issues can have a great effect on the way the researcher reports his/her findings.

Ball identifies the issue of *change* during research as a problem for researchers. He suggests that the researcher defines methods *at the beginning* of the research in an attempt to analyse the problems as he sees them. They are not necessarily the same problems that they turn out to be at the end of the research. He identifies two different sources of data: personal observation

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and information from school data. He suggests researchers need to consider change in both structures and observees, as well as change in the focus of the observer.

The whole question of change in a school, and in the political context of its work, has dominated the Hillside research. During the research, there were changes in personnel, in staff attitudes, and in the relationships between different segments of the school. This inevitably led to a change in focus of the research, as well as a change in perspective of the researcher. The research, in that sense, is not as objective as I originally expected it to be. It reflects what Ball describes as a subtle shift from a concern with the use of data as evidence, proof and conceptual elaboration, to the use of data to illustrate and illuminate the issues in the school.

Ball also identifies the issue of partiality, saying that research, by its very nature, leaves out some areas of an institution, and therefore distorts the view of it. Key informants, besides giving information, give comments and this can add to the distortion of the perception. He suggests that respondents' statements will reflect the vested interests of their position and status in the school. Ball describes this as a partisan response. Disaffected staff may feel their credibility, and the credibility of their subject/department is threatened. The *privileged observer* position I enjoyed at Hillside gave me insight into the position and attitudes of my informants. It enabled me to make judgements about the reliability of information from a base of reasonable knowledge.

Ball identifies the problems of feedback to subjects. He suggests staff can mistake intentions, and suggests that the research report can appear to be an analysis of faults that overlooks all that is good in the institution. Similarly, the Head may have anxiety about a distorted view of

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the school arising from the interviewing of non-typical members of staff reaching the public domain.

Ball identifies *political* issues in schools, an issue he returns to in *The Micro-politics of the School* (1987), and suggests that schools are political arenas where opposing ideologies and competing vested interests are played out. Any case study that taps into these facets of institutional life would seem to stand little chance of consensual agreement. The distortion that the industrial action inevitably caused to my research is discussed in Chapter 14. Micro-political activity is discussed further in the context of middle managers (Chapter 12).

Apart from the careful use of pseudonyms, Ball would try deliberately and actively to mislead any readers as to the location or identification of the school or schools concerned. His experience fuelled my concerns over identification and anonymity. I have deliberately obscured the identities of individual staff in an attempt to protect the school and the individuals in it.

Brown: *Schooling Ordinary Kids* (1987)

Brown argues that teachers' morale has been badly affected by the disappearance of job opportunities, which has made education irrelevant as a passport to qualifications and jobs. Consequently schools and teachers are assessing personal skills through profiles, as well as academic achievement through qualifications.

He uses questionnaires to give his study breadth and an ethnographic approach to give depth. He argues that using qualitative and quantitative methods in the same study is mutually advantageous, but present some problems of presentation, which he resolves by presenting separately data acquired in different ways. He argues that the questionnaires gave the data, and

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the interviews and observations allowed him to get behind the data. His work raises the question of whether it is possible for a teacher to do an ethnography of a group of children if the researcher is unable to enter their world.

Richardson: *The Teacher, the School and the Task of Management* (1973)

Richardson's work sits in contrast to Lacey, and other case study writers. She describes how she felt many times that the research process should be scientifically objective. It is apparent from her writing that she became closely identified and involved in the school and describes the way her personality impacted on the staff. She suggests that another consultant would have had a different experience because s/he would have brought different personal characteristics to the task.

Richardson also made it clear from the start that the school should be named. She argued that since anonymity in research projects can never be total, the researcher may find s/he betrays confidences of teachers who have collaborated with him/her on the material s/he wants to publish about them. This is in marked contrast to my own experience. In my initial discussions, I raised the possibility of identifying the school from the outset, but this approach was strenuously resisted by almost all staff. The controversial effects of a period of industrial action proved their view to be correct.

Richardson describes her role as one of being a consultant. She describes the nature of collaborative research as involving a large element of subjectivity. The researcher has a range of previous experiences that would affect his/her view of events. She acknowledged that the kind of interpretations she made would include unconscious as well as conscious feelings,

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beliefs and attitudes. These would be largely intuitive and incapable by their very nature of "objective" truth.

Richardson attended 19 staff meetings, 104 sectional meetings, and had 51 interviews with the Head and over 100 with individual members of staff. She estimated 400 hours of interview in total. Richardson also gained entry to the life of the school through attending working groups.

She describes her recording of the data as highly personal, because it was based on a developing relationship with staff. She rarely took notes, but made it clear that she recorded her experiences either on tape or on paper as soon as possible after the meeting. This gave a raw data base of over 1000 pages of information, which had to be used selectively. Confidentiality was a major factor in the selection of material to publish. The need to maintain confidentiality had to be weighed against the need to demonstrate the evidence that formed the basis of the conclusions. This problem was also identified by Hargreaves above.

Richardson (1973) describes two different interpretations of her role as consultant:

1. her own work with the Head and with other staff members or groups, chiefly attempting to interpret the meanings of the research experience;
2. the role as part of the context of the Head's leadership role in school, and the development of decision making processes. (p49)

She describes her own view of the consultant role as always being seen in relation to the overall task of the staff group, and the sub-tasks of individual staff and groups. Sometimes she had to resist attempts to draw her out of the consultant role by involving her in discussions outside the role of a staff member. As the relationship was with people, rather than role players, she found it inevitable that the consultant role became coloured by detail of personal and role relationships. These were outside the strict scope of the consultant. There was a great deal of material, some of which could not be used, because of the importance of respecting the

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privacy of individuals or groups of staff. Richardson describes the drawing of the line between legitimate public information and private concerns as difficult. I also experienced this problem, as publication of critical data could be damaging to the school and the staff in it.

Richardson knew six of the staff before she began her research through her university work. Because she was an outsider, staff had to make a new relationship with her. As she began to know the staff, her role became a mirror of their feelings of trust in the research, and to some extent in the headteacher. She identifies the research as a gradual building-up of trust between herself and the staff, but points out that inevitably that trust would have to be tested. This occurred on the two occasions she was ready to publish reports about the school. She identifies the problems as arising because she:

did not respect the integrity of the boundary round the school by first securing sanction from within the boundary to take the report outside. (p54)

This led to anxieties about:

how I would present the institution to the outside world (p55)

and led to the postponement of a planned lecture course. Richardson suggests that the anxieties expressed to her about reporting were no different from the anxieties all teachers have about staff carrying information outside the school boundary.

She describes her inability to take part in a discussion in a (rather heated) staff meeting about reporting where she found herself lacking detachment, and being very strongly identified with the problems being discussed. The discussion focused for her the dilemma of reconciling her own feelings about the staff as people with their role in the institution. She wondered whether she would be able to report truthfully about the school without labelling it in some way, and without betraying the trust the staff had placed in her. She describes the conflict as being between her wish to preserve the Nailsea experiences by locking them up in a private world,

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and the necessity of exposing them so that others could make use of them. She argues that the work at Nailsea became most real when she felt she was able to both care about the school, and extract from her experiences of the research some ideas that might benefit teachers in other institutions.

The Hillside Experience

My position has been different from the other researchers discussed above. I was an experienced full-time teacher and part time student. This gave a number of advantages that related to being totally familiar with the workings of a school. It meant I was fully conversant with all the issues and problems that face schools from a teacher's point of view. It led to ready acceptance as a fellow professional and enabled me to establish both trust and understanding. I had experienced many of the roles that I was investigating. I had been an assistant teacher, a head of year, a head of department, and a school union representative. I had worked with a number of heads in different schools, and brought all this experience to bear on the research I was undertaking.

My position was not one of participation. I did not engage in the activities I set out to observe (Cohen & Mannion 1980). I did not really fit into the category of non-participant observer either: *aloof and eschewing group membership*. Lacey taught at Hightown Grammar. He was a full time member of staff, though on a different and privileged basis. Hargreaves described himself as participating as a member of the group as well as observing it. Unlike Hargreaves, I did not sit at the back of classes and observe lessons. I experienced some of the role conflicts that Hargreaves describes in a different way because staff at all levels wanted to "get things off their chests" and I was a useful listening ear. I felt on occasions that some staff thought the research would "sort things out", presumably by bringing about a change in the style of

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management. Woods describes himself as living in the school for a year, sharing its activities as far as possible, observing events as they happened. He defines his role as an *involved observer*. Like Woods, I filled different roles at different times. I was a counsellor, listening to staff problems. On occasions I was a consultant advising staff, especially in faculty D, about problems they were facing. Sometimes I was a secret agent given sensitive information in the hope that I might be able to use my position to bring about change. Often I was simply a fellow human being who understood the difficulties of life in school. The role of substitute member of staff did not apply as I did not work in the school.

The focus of my research was also different. I was examining the management process. I was not concerned to see teachers at work with children, or compare styles of classroom management.

In Summary

This chapter has attempted to locate the Hillside research in the context of single school case studies and explored the issue of methodology. It suggests that my research viewpoint, with its greater access and sense of being an "insider" is better described as *privileged observation* than participant observation. This approach is significantly different from previous research methodologies. (Cf. Woods 1979.)

CHAPTER 4

THE RESEARCH STRATEGY

Introduction

This chapter looks at my research methodology in the Hillside study, particularly the role of the researcher as a **privileged observer**. It first describes the severe constraints that the problem of confidentiality imposed and the impact this had on the research. It examines the methods of data collection and comments on the limitations of the research. It concludes by considering the unexpected disruption to the research of two periods of industrial action and the effect this had on the completion of the work

Confidentiality and access

Confidentiality was a key part of the agreement to undertake the research. I had not expected this issue to cause any serious difficulties when it came to the reporting of the data. However, the industrial action that dominated the latter part of the research changed both the research focus and staff attitudes. Reporting fully whilst maintaining confidentiality became a serious problem.

The initial research proposal was put to the staff in the following paper:

The headteacher has agreed to allow me to use Hillside School as a subject of study as part of the research I am doing with the Open University. The grand sounding title of the research is "The contribution of a policy of staff management to the achievement of the aims and objectives of the school."

The research will involve work on how decisions are reached, how staff are consulted about decisions, and how far staff identify with decisions taken in the school.

My contention is that different styles of management and different administrative procedures may affect the morale of the staff, and the extent to which they feel involved in policy decisions, and so affect the extent to which they identify with the school's aims as an educational establishment.

The nature of the research means that I will be looking at staff opinions, and crucial to my research will be the willingness of staff to discuss policies, decisions, and their reactions to them.

This is a potentially explosive area of research, with possible ramifications for all staff if they feel they are being called upon to criticise colleagues or the school administration. Obviously,

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if the work is to have any purpose I have to be able to persuade you as individuals, and as a staff as a whole to have confidence in my fairness and honesty as well as my discretion, so that you will agree to take part in this research, as without your co-operation the research will be meaningless. I would like to ask you to help by assisting in the research in a number of ways.

Firstly, I would like to consider the management structure of the school as it appears in theory and see if the structure works the same way in practice. This involves a consideration of staff roles.

Secondly, I would like to consider critical incidents, where the machinery of discussion and consultation appears to falter.

Thirdly, I would like the opportunity to discuss with each member of staff individually the way in which he or she interprets his/her role in the school and his/her participation in the management process.

After this first stage of research, which would probably take most of the next academic year, I propose to present a preliminary report of my findings to a staff meeting with the opportunity to discuss the report's conclusions. (This meeting never took place, because of the embargo on meetings that was part of the union action.) I would then like to leave the report with the school and return after a further two years to repeat the style of research and see if there appear to be changes in staff attitudes to their roles.

It is important to realise that ultimately the results of this research will be published; probably only as a paper in academic journal with limited circulation, but will nevertheless be a public document. Staff may feel uneasy about putting themselves in the possible glare of publicity, and thus perhaps affecting their careers or their reputation.

I would propose that any report, prior to publication will be made available to all staff involved for discussion and amendment, and that I preserve the anonymity of the school and the staff by the creation of a fictitious school and staff based on the research. Staff could also be protected by being referred to by function rather than as a person.

I ought to add that the purpose of the research is to look at the structure of management not the personalities of people involved in the management of the school. Obviously the two can not be separated out entirely, but my contention is that it is the structure rather than the personalities that is important in this issue. It may be that some or all staff will choose not to participate in this research, and it may be that if a large number of staff decline to participate, the research will have to be done in a different way.

Really this is a plea for your help, as without it my research plans will fail before they have got properly started.

The Head has agreed to the research being carried out, and has agreed that this paper might form the basis of discussion at the next staff meeting, when I will attempt to answer any questions you may wish to ask about the research.

The staff meeting to discuss the proposal took place in June 1982. My notes of the meeting reported:

1. The Head was willing to allow the research to go ahead. This was a bold and crucial decision in that he was the one member of staff who was most exposed by the research.

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2. If the research was to be meaningful, it needed to be constructive and about situations, rather than a negative analysis of personal shortcomings. It is structure, rather than personalities that lies at the heart of the research.
3. The focus of the research keeps changing as I progress.
4. The questionnaires are intended to define the school's structure at a given point, as the school is a dynamic organisation and its structure is always changing. The questionnaires will be anonymous and returned individually in an SAE.
5. The individual interviews, over a year, are to try to assess qualitative reactions to the structure; to see how people *feel* about the structure, as this side of the work greatly affects the staff's motivation.
6. Attendance at Senior Management and Middle Management meetings, as far as the demands of my own job will allow, will give insight into the way decisions are made. They are the forum for discussion about policy, and a key part of the decision-making process.
7. I would also like to maintain irregular contacts with staff about any issues they feel might be relevant, and would welcome telephone contact.

My research proposals were the last item on a 14 item agenda at the staff meeting, and were very briefly discussed, with very little interest aroused except over confidentiality. I described how Richardson had carried out the research at Nailsea, identifying both the school and individual members of staff by name, and suggested that Hillside might also be identified. This was not acceptable to the staff, who insisted that total confidentiality would have to be guaranteed if they were to agree. The head made it clear that the governors' consent to the proposal was conditional on the staff's agreement, and I accepted the staff's view, and undertook to guarantee confidentiality. The head was completely neutral and said the issue should be decided by a secret ballot, which he would organise, and which subsequently accepted the research proposal.

The initial research proposal, that I examine the way a school's aim and objectives were affected by staff management policies, was relatively straightforward. It did not seem to present me with any insurmountable problems. However, in common with other ethnographic researchers, the initial plan took on a life of its own. In my case the onset of the teacher action

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of the mid and late eighties changed my research focus significantly. The relative cosiness of the initial research was blown apart by the hostility that the industrial unrest caused. The effects of teacher action are well documented in Pietrasik (1987) and Hellowell (1990).

The industrial action of 1984 also prevented me from reporting back as I had originally agreed. There were no meetings to report to, because of the action. I discussed the progress of the work with the head, other members of the senior management team, and other staff at the school, but on an informal and rather ad hoc basis, rather than as a formal presentation.

My Methodology: the role of the Privileged Observer

My own research position had much in common with previous case studies. Many of the difficulties recorded by Hargreaves (1967), Ball (1982) and Richardson (1973) affected me, though sometimes in different ways.

There were also important differences in my position. By the time the research began I had been teaching for fourteen years. I was an educational insider, with many shared values and perceptions of the world of the teacher at the time of the research. As much of my research would be about staff attitudes, this position gave me a level of knowledge of the way schools work. I also had some knowledge of Hillside School and some of the personalities involved in its management. I had known some of the staff for several years. They were, in some cases, friends as well as colleagues, and people whose judgement I trusted. They inevitably became my "key informants", as for Woods (1979) and Ball (1981). There were also colleagues with whom I had no particular relationship, before the research project commenced, and who were less willing to work with me.

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I was not a participant observer. I was a visiting observer making my observations from a position of great privilege. Because I knew quite a lot about the school and the personalities, I found it relatively easy to build up or establish relationships with most of the staff. There were some important differences between my research and that of other writers. I was a fellow teacher from another school who was doing a bit of research; someone who came into the school from time to time, and who came to attend the regular management meetings. This position had advantages of insight and understanding, but also had significant disadvantages. I was not available when I would like to have been. Senior management meetings took place during the working day, when I was not available, and I never attended one. This omission prevented me from giving a full picture of the management process at Hillside. My work is not an ethnography: it is not an in-depth study of an institution from the inside. It is a privileged observation of a school using some ethnographic techniques to obtain and analyse data in an attempt to develop an understanding of the relationship between management and morale. However, the level of response from colleagues in interviews and the problems this caused in using the data obtained are discussed on page 43. The picture that emerges is therefore, both intimate and partial.

Looking back through the work of the other researchers quoted in Chapter 3, I too collected evidence through the observation of meetings, recording decisions as they were taken, and from published school documents. This allowed me to observe the nature of power relationships in the school, and map out the different contributions made by individual speakers. Most of the research, however, was directed at eliciting opinion. There are parallels with Hargreaves' (1967) attention to attitudes, and Richardson's (1973) desire to understand the sentient systems of individuals and groups of staff. The questionnaires and the interviews, both formal and informal, were intended to elicit the staff's view of events. I met all three of

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Hargreaves' problems: selectivity; the difference between empirical observation and the understanding of attitudes; and difficulties in writing up the work. The role conflict he identified in his appendix was a very real experience for me. Like Ball (1982), the propositions that I felt might emerge as conclusions to my research no longer fill me with confidence in their universal application. Like Woods (1979), I experienced the range of different perceptions of my role, and the vital importance of key informants.

My **focus** was closer to Richardson's than to other observers of school management. I was observing the way developments in management and their effect on the decision-making process affected the school, and particularly the morale of its staff. **Methodologically**, I was closer to Woods, seeking understanding and involvement in the school, whilst trying to retain distance and objectivity.

Richardson identified closely with the headteacher's perspective in Nailsea, and saw many of the events through his eyes, discussing in detail the implications of many meetings with him in private. I was much closer to the middle managers and it is from their perspective, rather than the head's that my research is recorded. This enables me to look for confirmation of Richardson's finding from the perspective of a different management tier. I experienced the school's processes from their perspective, interviewing every member of middle management on both occasions. Similarly, when the industrial disputes were taking place my observation was disrupted to some extent, as middle management meetings did not take place.

I was, initially, less close to the assistant staff, perhaps because of my relationship with some members of middle management, and this is reflected in the interview data. I carried out

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detailed interviews with the staff of five of the seven faculties, four in great detail and with 100% involvement.

Data Collection

Having decided my research stance, I needed to define a strategy that would allow me to collect data of different kinds. It seemed essential to be able to cross-check information from one source with other information from other sources, especially as I would be looking at different types of material, using triangulation techniques (Guba & Lincoln 1981). Obtaining published data about the school was not difficult. I was given full access to all school documents, produced for both internal and external consumption and they provided a record of the school's "official" stance on a number of issues. Thus I obtained copies of the school's publicity brochure, the staff handbook, the Aims and Objectives documents, etc. However, published information would not, on its own, allow me to get under the skin of the school, and I needed information about the way the management strategies were put into action. I chose to seek this information in three ways: questionnaires; interviews and observation of meetings.

Questionnaires

I needed a "snap-shot" of the school at a given time, so that I could see what the staff thought about the way they were managed. I could obtain this by using a questionnaire asking staff to comment on their perceptions of different aspects of the school. The questionnaire was planned to be easy to code (Cohen and Mannion 1980) and was trialled in another school. It was sent to all staff in the school in an envelope and with a stamped reply envelope. I also had a pigeon hole in the staff room in which the completed questionnaires could be deposited. By asking staff to identify their position, I could see if perceptions were affected by role. By repeating the questionnaire after a two year interval, I could see if there had been any changes

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in the staff's perceptions of the school's functioning. The full questionnaire is shown in Appendix 1.

The introduction to my questionnaire explained that I wanted to obtain:

a view of the structure and organisation of the school at one particular moment. In a year's time the school could be a very different place, with different staff and different procedures for managing the school. A questionnaire by its nature can only capture a part of the picture, but it provides a rough baseline of information which will be supplemented as interviews are conducted during the year. A second questionnaire will be circulated to colleagues in two years time to see if the school's structure and organisation has remained the same or has changed significantly.

The questionnaire gave me data about the staff's perceptions of the school. The questionnaire dealt with four main aspects of the work of the school:

- * the transmission of information and the communication network
- * the effective hierarchy of the school
- * the informal social structures of the staff
- * the staff's perceptions of the aims and objectives of the school and the way they were being implemented.

Heads of faculty, heads of year and senior staff were asked to complete an additional sheet in their questionnaire. They were asked about the decision-making process and the extent to which they were involved in decisions affecting their particular areas of responsibility.

My decision to make the questionnaires anonymous came from the great concerns about identification expressed by the staff. In retrospect, this decision was to cause difficulties, as I could not be sure that the two rounds of questionnaires were completed by the same people. Comments made by staff, and notes in the returned questionnaires suggested that this was the case. Some respondents were happy to identify themselves through a note on the questionnaire, but I was not able to make a complete identification of questionnaires' respondents. This meant I was unable to cross reference questionnaire responses with interview data.

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The data that came from the questionnaires was very valuable in terms of staff views of the structure and decision-making process, but they proved to be far less revealing than responses I obtained from in interviews. These provided much more sensitive data than the questionnaires.

These questionnaires were circulated in the Autumn term of 1982 and 1984. Twenty-six questionnaires were returned in the first series, and 29 in the second series, representing almost half of the staff. The questionnaires were all analysed and the conclusions are reported in different chapters of the research. The full analysis is in Appendix 2.

Interviews

To give me a more detailed view of the staff's perceptions I used personal interviews. These allowed me to explore particular issues in greater depth with individuals, and establish by direct observation any particular feelings or responses that the questionnaire had failed to pick up. The interviews were intended to discover the attitudes of the staff to the changes in the way they were managed and the way the school was run. I wanted to see how the management of the school translated into action in the eyes of the staff, and how they felt about the management processes. The interviews would give the qualitative data that could be compared with the questionnaires and my own field observations. Once the industrial action began, it was my only way of gauging staff opinion, as meetings did not take place.

The interviews were conducted in the staff's own homes. The first series took place between the autumn of 1983 and the spring of 1984; the second series between the autumn of 1985 and the spring of 1986. The same staff were interviewed, except for two members of staff who had left, and I interviewed their replacements.

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The motives of staff in talking to me varied. One member of staff who was unwilling to talk to me in the first round of interviews was very keen to do so in the second round. He wanted to tell me at length about the shortcomings of the school and the way he felt he was treated. Another member of staff who had been interviewed in the first round declined to be interviewed a second time.

The same questions were used with all interviewees and on both occasions. Some minor modifications were made to the second interviews in the light of the results of the first set. There had been no further discussion about the school's aims and objectives since the first set of interviews, and so the questions relating to aims and objectives were not pursued.

The second round of interviews were spaced over a longer period and were a little less formal than the first series. The fact that I had already been to staffs' homes and that they knew that the interview was nothing to fear helped them be more relaxed with me. The ban on meetings at Hillside meant that I was not able to attend and observe staff, either in meetings or in the informality of the staff room. I relied rather more on the interviews to provide data about the staff's perceptions of the school's operation. I was, therefore, keen to keep the interviews going, allowing them to digress rather more than in the first series. This helped me keep up to date with some of the minutiae of everyday life that I was not able to observe directly. This sometimes meant that staff began the interview at a different point, reflecting their current concerns, and rather than interrupt the flow of their thought, I let the interview proceed in a different order. The interview schedule is found in Appendix 3.

Every interview was taped and transcribed as a summary, quoting the precise words of the teachers in response to the main questions. This allowed me to reorganise the data in different

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ways as part of the analysis. I was able to group responses by faculty and by position in the management structure. I tried to make sense of the data by structuring it within categories, to give it meaning, though I did not use mapping techniques (Jones 1987). I did make a note of any apparent contradictions in the data and in this way tried to build some understanding of the perceptions of the world of the interviewees. The original recordings and my working transcriptions are available for inspection.

I conducted 29 staff interviews in the first round, and 24 in the second round. In addition, I had 5 interviews with the Head, and 22 informal interviews with staff. I received 7 reports about incidents I did not observe directly, but that staff were keen to tell me about. All the details of these interviews are in my field notes.

Some of the data collected through interview could not be used, simply because it was so personal, or identifiable. This has meant that some interesting lines of enquiry could not be followed up, and others could not be reported for the sake of the staff concerned. Heads of year, whose responsibilities for student welfare put them in the front line of the dispute, were one group that was easily identifiable. Any comment from a head of year about his/her subject area immediately identified the teacher concerned. Similarly, other staff with responsibilities at the edge of the main curriculum, such as careers, or P.E., who usually spent much of their own time on their work commitments could be identified.

My privileged position meant that some staff used interviews with me to get things off their chest. They were, for the most part, extremely frank in their views, regarding me as someone to whom they could safely sound off their views about close colleagues. This therapy aspect of the interviewing usually occurred when colleagues felt disgruntled or overlooked or

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undervalued by the senior staff (Cf. Woods 1979 and Hargreaves 1967). Partly colleagues thought that I would be able to "do" something about their concerns. I did discuss a number of issues with the head on two occasions. Inevitably there were occasions when there was a difficulty not so much of the identification of individual teachers, but the harm that could be done to the school if some issues were pursued.

How much the rest of the assistant staff, who opted not to be interviewed, would agree with the main findings is difficult to assess. I managed to interview all middle managers on both occasions, and almost all the senior staff. I am, therefore, confident about the accuracy of their stated views quoted in this work.

Meetings

The last aspect of the research was to monitor the decision-making process by attending the regular management meetings whenever possible.

Between 1982 and 1986, I attended 45 management meetings, though there was a significant interruption to the pattern of meetings when members of professional associations withdrew their goodwill. There were also meetings of the senior staff during the working day that I was unable to attend. My observations of meetings are included in my field notes.

Attendance at these meetings allowed me to compare the management theory described by the head with the way the school's policy was decided and implemented in practice. It allowed me to examine the ways in which the aims and objectives of the school were put into action. This gave me an insight into the management style that was adopted by the senior staff. I was able

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to see the extent to which the head felt bound by the decisions taken at the consultative meetings and see the reaction of staff to proposed changes to the school's organisation.

From time to time I was also telephoned or invited to join informal discussion about aspects of management or particular issues, and the notes of these meetings are also included in my field notes.

Triangulation of these five data collection techniques: questionnaire, interview, observation, conversation and documentation allowed me to cross check the findings of my research (Cohen and Mannion 1980). Each method acquired different data in a different context. I was able to build up a coherent picture of the school's functioning, and compare the reactions of the staff at different levels in the career structure.

Writing up and Reporting

I found that writing up my research gave me several problems. The industrial disputes that occurred in the early eighties had a deeply divisive effect on many schools, including Hillside. It polarised opinion. Events and decisions that would be accepted with a shrug of the shoulders in "normal" times became major issues during the action. Good inter-personal relationships were fractured when political and management issues became blurred with the personalities and politics in the situation. This did not occur just between senior staff and the assistant teachers, but between members of different professional associations. The divisions and hostility within the staff made it difficult for me to discuss my findings with staff, and inviting them to read the research at that point was impossible. I was acutely aware of the danger of staff trying to identify individual comments, bearing in mind Ball's (1982)

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experiences. I felt that I would rather not publish, than publish and do great harm to the school and staff.

The problems of immersion (Woods 1979), particularly, haunted me through the period of action. I found the experience of trying to write the research report in such circumstances very challenging personally, and felt my loyalties sharply divided between the demands of the research and the personal claims on me of the staff of Hillside School. I doubted that I would ever be able to write up the work without betraying the confidences of the staff and doing damage to the school. Richardson had to cancel a planned lecture course as a result of staff reaction to making public information about Nailsea. For me the effect was to postpone the completion of the research for ten years, to allow time to cool the passions that the events of that period caused.

Limitations of the Research Strategy

I have already described some of the limitations of the research imposed as conditions for the approval of the work (p36-37). Other factors also limit the work.

The first limitation lies in the nature of observation-based research. The study is of only one school and therefore the findings need to be cross checked with other schools. The research is open to the challenge, therefore, that it is non-typical. However, my findings reflect the findings of the other researchers discussed earlier in this chapter.

A second limitation also derives from the observer-based approach. I came to know the school well and already knew some of the staff personally. My own involvement was therefore two sided. I developed good personal relationships with some members of staff, including the

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head. They tended to be the ones who telephoned and to whom I spoke most frequently. Others were only involved on the margins of the research, or joined the school part way through the project. Consequently, I experienced a partial view of the school's life. It may be that the personal relationships, struck up with people who thought in a similar way to myself about issues, coloured the research. It is certainly true that some members of staff were totally opposed to the project and refused to co-operate. I experienced no outright hostility, but several staff made clear their reservations and refused to take part in questionnaires or interviews. One colleague I knew well was convinced that any publication of any information about any school would be seized on by the media to the school's disadvantage. This seemed to him to be too close to washing dirty linen in public. Despite this, he spoke to me, from time to time, about issues of concern and was not opposed to my research or me in any personal sense.

A third limitation relates to the time I was able to spend at the school. I have already mentioned that I was not able to observe senior management meetings, as they took place during the day, when I was teaching in my own school, and this leaves a significant gap. This meant I had to rely on accounts from senior staff who attended those meetings, rather than on my own direct observations. For example, the interview evidence suggests that senior management was not always united, but I have no direct evidence from meetings or observation as to the extent of this.

I was able to attend middle management and staff meetings, which took place at the end of the working day. I tended to arrive at the school after meetings had begun, and therefore missed some important matters. I tried to fill the gaps by talking to colleagues after meetings but was not always fully successful and, of course, did not necessarily receive an unbiased account.

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Teacher turnover was another factor that limited my work. A number of staff who took part in the first phase left before the work was completed. I tried to compensate for this by interviewing their successors, who brought a different perspective on the school. A member of staff in post for a few months and appointed by the present administration was likely to have a different view from a well-established colleague who had experienced the change in leadership described in Chapter 6. However, the insight of a new member of staff offered alternative explanations of events that was a very useful safeguard against developing a totally internal and school-orientated perspective for interpretation.

The periods of industrial action by teachers' professional associations also affected the research. For several months there were no meetings to attend and I was out of touch with the school. Telephone calls and occasional interviews took the place of direct personal observation, and I was less confident that I was able to feel the pulse of the school at that time.

I also have my own views about the management of staff and schools, which must have coloured my research, and which have changed during the period of the research. During that time, I moved from being a head of department to a deputy headship, and therefore developed a different view of school organisation and management. This gave me an understanding and insight into the attitudes of staff in different positions at Hillside from two perspectives.

Looking back, I see the events with a different perspective. Here was a school embarking on a process of change and development, both to its organisation and curriculum. A new head was trying to develop a different, more democratic style of management and weld a new senior management team together. Forces beyond his control led to industrial action in 1984 and again in 1985, shattering morale, undermining the proposed developments and leading to

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rancour and bitterness between previously amicable colleagues. These developments inevitably shifted the focus of the research. My initial interest in aims and objectives as a starting point for the examination of a school's approach to management took second place to key issues of the management of disputes and the effects on morale of a prolonged period of professional unrest.

When the action first started, I saw it as a management problem for the head. Now I can see that the problem was much more than a simple staff management issue, though that was important. It affected the whole of the process of change the head was trying to introduce and forced him to alter his style of management against his will. The situation changed from one that was within his own control, to one where outside events had a major impact on the school. The contextual factors became prominent, and my initial focus changed. I had begun the research by investigating first order events, the head's style and the teachers' response. The action meant the focus shifted to events decided to a large extent by the external context. This affected both the head and his ability to manage the school as he wished. It also affected the teachers' responses to the wider political aspects of management that influence schools. The flexibility of the ethnographic position enabled the research to adapt to this change in focus, and examine the effect of the change of circumstances brought about by the action on the school.

Developing a democratic management style when staff refused to attend meetings was almost impossible. The management of morale in this situation was extremely difficult. Feelings between teachers reached the point that members of one association refused to speak to members of another association. The head was placed in a new context, where he had very little power to manage the situation as he wished. To be an observer of the school during a

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very painful period caused me great anxiety, but observing the changes in staff morale was a great opportunity and gave my research a new, unexpected dimension.

In summary

This chapter has examined the methodology of the research. It has looked at the role of the observer, and shown that this research does not easily fit the tradition of participant observer, nor of specialist consultant. The most appropriate description is *privileged observer*. It examines the methods of data collection used and discusses their strengths and disadvantages. Finally, it shows that the effects of the industrial disputes during the research changed both its scope and direction.

It shows that the position of a part-time researcher who is a practising teacher has benefits of insight and access. The privileged observer also has problems of reporting that may be different from the problems experienced by researchers who are outsiders.

Drawing conclusions from the data was difficult, as it was not always clear whether it reflected responses to the school management or to the wider issue of the dispute. The bitterness that the dispute created caused problems in reporting back. This led to the decision to delay completion of the research until the issues that caused such tensions were eased by the passage of time.

CHAPTER 5

MORALE: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

In this chapter I review the literature about schools and morale. My starting point is a discussion of the concept of morale itself. The chapter then examines morale in the context of school leadership, the exercise of power and theories of school organisation. I then consider the way in which morale affects people at different levels in an organisation, looking at the morale of headteachers; middle managers and assistant teachers. The chapter goes on to examine morale in the context of change within schools. Finally I examine the effects of change from outside the school, especially from the LEA and central government. I consider its effect on morale in school, especially in the context of the industrial action that dominated the early eighties when the fieldwork for this thesis was carried out.

Morale

Herzberg (1966) found that job satisfaction is not to be achieved through financial reward, but through a sense of worth and self-esteem by the worker. It is about recognition and value; dissatisfaction is caused when people feel unvalued, through alienation from policy-making, poor working conditions, and poor rewards. Job satisfaction and morale are about how people **feel** about their work, and, in Richardson's (1973) phrase, this makes people a *prey to irrational forces*.

Graham Williams (1984) reviews the literature on morale. Much of the work reflects a structuralist view as morale is described in organisational terms. Smith (1966) defined morale as:

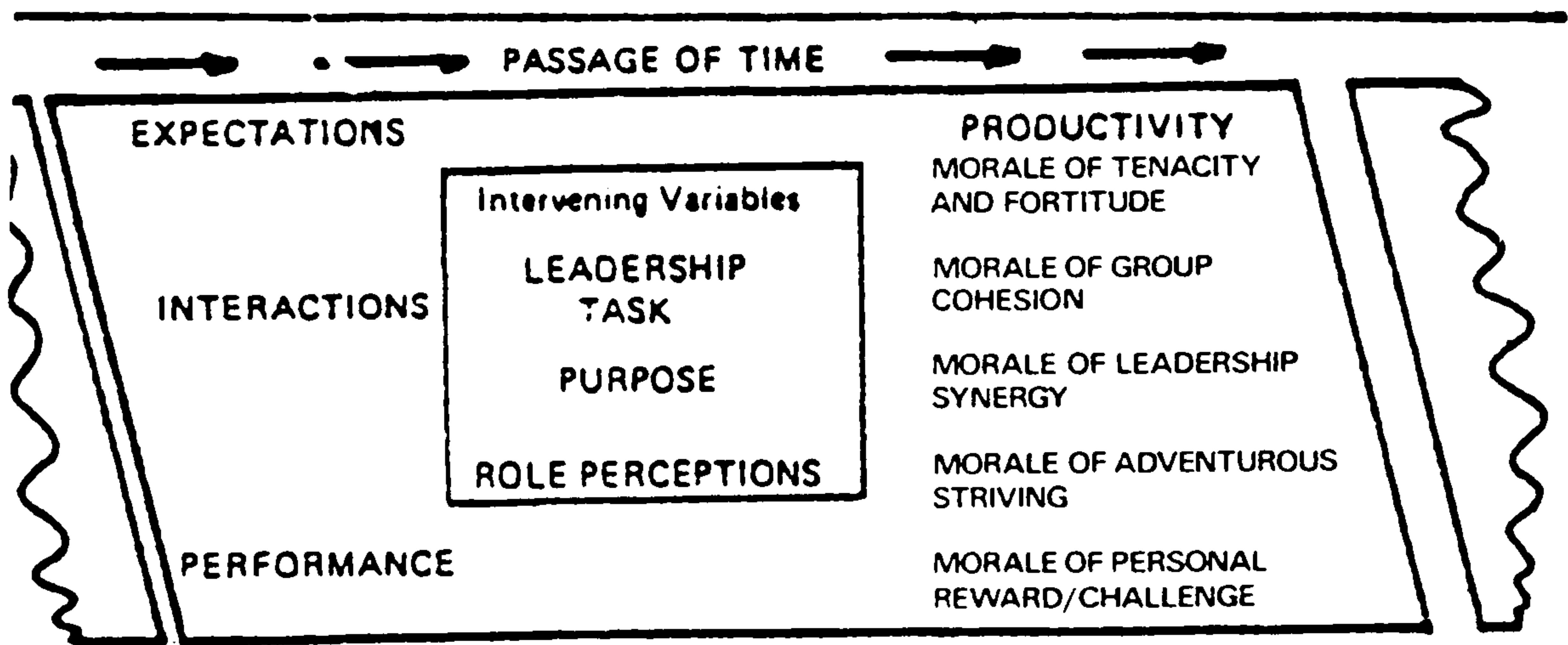
A forward-looking and confident state of mind relevant to a shared and vital purpose.
(Williams 1984, p2)

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He suggested the five elements of morale in schools were:

- * Group Cohesion:
the extent to which individual teachers co-operate and feel united in striving to achieve the school's goals
- * Tenacity and Fortitude:
persistence in pursuing goals, enduring frustration and overcoming difficulty
- * Leadership synergy:
the group energy generated and released by the school's leaders
- * Adventurous striving:
the enthusiasm and confidence in striving towards the school's goals
- * Personal reward:
the incentives of personal satisfaction in the school situation.

Williams and Lane (1976) developed Smith's (1966) model to include the five dimensions of morale identified above. Their model of morale is shown in the diagram below.



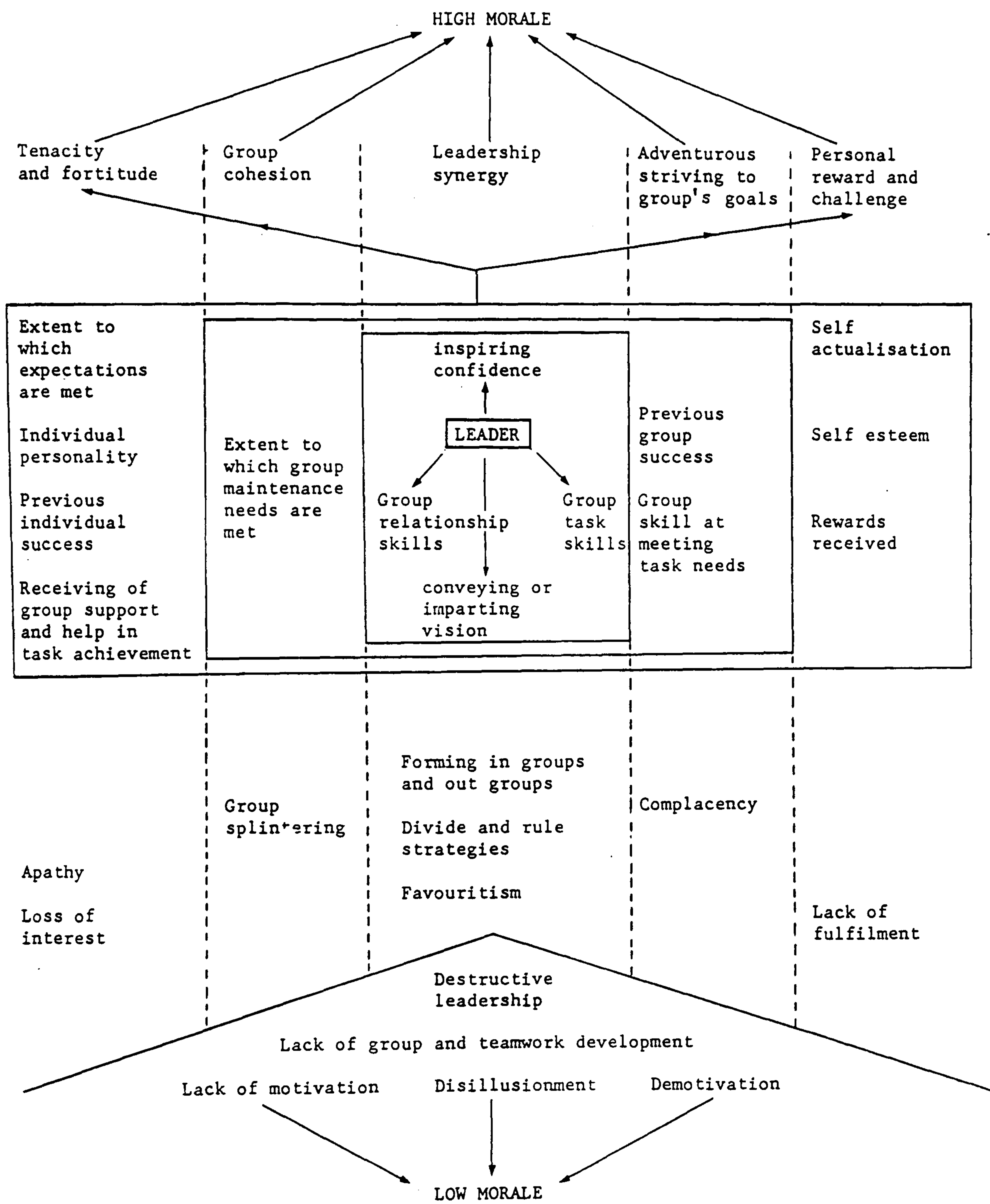
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This model identifies another key element in morale: it changes over time. Part of the development of morale is the experience of success or failure in one enterprise that is brought to the next enterprise that members of the team embark upon. This explains why morale was seen by Belbin (1981) as a marginal factor in team failure. He explored morale in an experimental context, where groups worked on tasks. Some of the groups finishing with abysmal results, started out as happy teams. Even at the end members said how much they had enjoyed working together: "They went down smiling." Belbin thought that mental ability and personality were both more significant than morale as causes of failure, though poor morale often emerged as a consequence of failure.

However, Belbin's teams only came together to perform the one task. If the same team that had been a failure in the first task then had to continue to work together on a series of further tasks, morale might well have become a factor in their success. In a school the individual faculty, or the senior management team cannot come together and then break up. The staff have to continue working together, and their morale then becomes more significant. Williams' (1984) work suggests that one key factor in the development of morale is the way that groups work together over a period of time and enjoy feelings of shared success that enable them to look forward positively to future challenges.

Williams also produces a complex but relevant diagram (overleaf) that shows the relationship between the factors that affect morale, and leadership, the group and the individual. This model identifies morale in relationship to the leader. In schools, as in many other large organisations, there is more than one team and more than one leader. Williams' diagram, therefore, is useful in identifying the factors that affect the relationship between the leader and the morale of the led, but is unsatisfactory as a complete model for a whole organisation. Throughout this

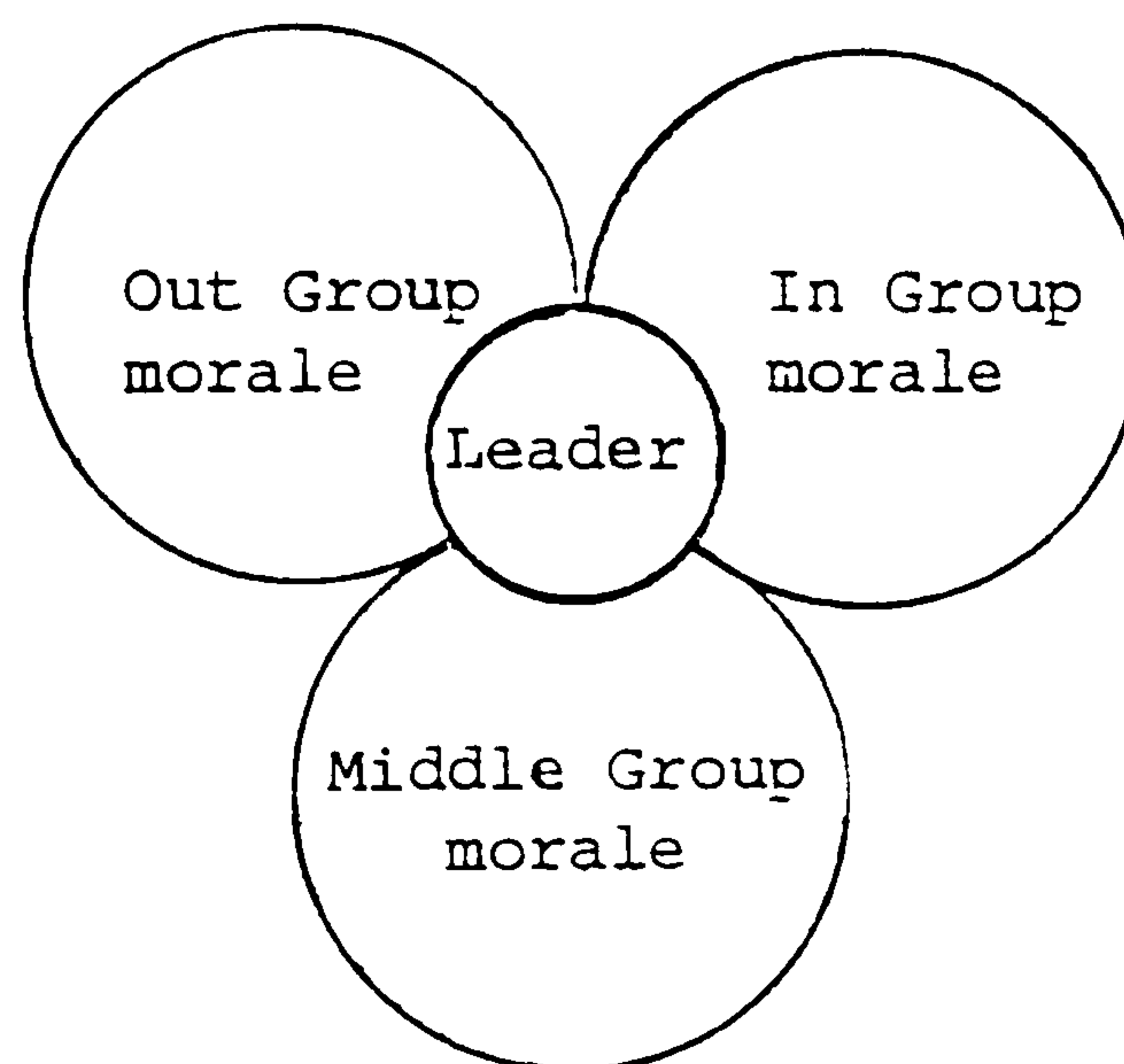
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research I use Williams' model to demonstrate that morale is a team issue. Morale can be high in one team but low in another team. The definition of morale by a single application of the model does not give an accurate picture of morale in the organisation.

Another view of morale is shown in the work of Liden & Graen (1980).



They suggest that leaders treat subordinates in different ways. The relationship is shown diagrammatically as non overlapping groups clustered round the leader. Those whose competence and skill, trustworthiness and motivation to assume responsibility are accepted receive preferential treatment and become the In Group. The remainder fall into the Out Group. Later research also added a Middle Group. The model needs to be applied to each group where leadership is experienced. Thus Lacey (1970) identified a difference between the in-group and out-group of the senior master that manifested itself in different behaviour:

I noticed when the senior master first introduced me to the staff, he took great care to introduce me to the more senior members first. In addition, if I was going to observe a lesson, he almost invariably explained the situation well beforehand to the senior men, but often felt free to catch the junior staff just before the lesson started. (p164-5)

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This differentiated behaviour also reflects a difference in power and status, an issue discussed in more detail on p160.

Evans (1992) argues that morale is an individual response, that will vary in members of the same group because of the hidden agenda each member of the group brings with their membership of the group. These different agendas affect morale and are closely related to the individual's concept of self. She suggests that:

morale is related to the individual's pursuit of the goals requisite for the realisation of the self concept...Specific dimensions of morale can all be cancelled down to this single dimension. (p167)

The individual will form a hierarchy of goals...as priorities change, so too will the factors that affect morale, and what was a morale issue last week may well be relegated to a minor irritant this week (p169)

She defines morale as:

a state of mind determined by the individual's anticipation of the extent of satisfaction of those needs which s/he perceives as significantly affecting his/her total situation. (p169)

She suggests that morale is an individual experience and therefore has a different focus from Williams (1984), who sees it in organisational terms.

These various views of morale each contribute to a picture that needs to be developed in more detail. Morale describes how people feel about their work and themselves. It concerns how people relate to leaders in an organisation. It is about their self esteem, the values and perceptions they bring to their work place, and the way that shared experience changes their expectations and views.

I am trying to identify the features of an organisation that may help develop or damage morale.

The key difference that my research shows is that morale is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional. People work in a variety of teams, and each team has its own morale. Individual concerns will colour morale. Self esteem will be affected by factors of recognition and value by

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a variety of leaders, both within and outside the organisation. Morale changes over time as people gain experience and personal factors affect career goals.

This research shows that morale is affected by the membership of different groups in an organisation, and that individual staff may experience high morale in one sphere of their work, and low morale in another. I am proposing that the group factors that affect morale can be identified, and that it should then be possible to take steps to improve or change those elements of the organisation that damage morale. Evans is right to focus on the experience of personal distress that individuals bring to their work. There is also a need to identify ways in which organisations can promote a high level of morale through their working practices.

I define positive morale as the sense of personal and group worth generated when a group of people sharing a common purpose are able to work together in harmony and with a sense of mutual understanding and support to achieve their common objectives.

Leadership, Power, Management and Organisation Theory

✦

I now propose to examine the issue of morale in the context of the exercise of power, school leadership and theories of school organisation.

A key activity for leaders is the use of power. French and Raven (1959) analyse where power comes from and identify a number of power sources:

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- * Physical power,
i.e. superior force, which is rarely used in work situations,
- * Resource power
the power to reward,
- * Position power
legitimate or legal power that comes from a power base within a structure,
- * Expert power
the possession of the knowledge and expertise that is acknowledged by others,
- * Negative power
the use of disruptive tactics to undermine another's position, status or initiative.

Successful heads use their powers cautiously, managing resources to meet their perception of the best interests of the institution.

Lukes (1974) suggests that in relation to decision-making there are three dimensions of power. The first dimension is control over decisions that are taken. The second is control over decisions that are prevented from being taken, and the third over issues that are never allowed to arise for decisions to be taken. These ideas were later taken up and elaborated by Ball (1987).

Leadership, management and the nature of an organisation are all conditioned by the way the leader chooses to exercise power. Morale is determined by the way people feel about their work and respond to leadership, and therefore centres on the way people respond to the exercise of power. Power that is exercised legitimately and therefore with the consent of the governed is more likely to produce high morale. This is especially so if the governed feel involved in the exercise of that power, through participation in the decision-making process. Where power is exercised arbitrarily, or with obviously dubious legitimacy, the governed are more likely to resent the source of power, and thus the exercise of power and morale are inextricably linked. All leadership decisions have an effect upon morale, because those

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decisions will impinge on the lives of the led. Taking decisions without regard for the consequences for morale serves to reduce the acceptability of the leadership to the led.

Both French and Raven's (1959), and Lukes' (1974) definitions of power need to be exemplified within the power structure of schools. The explanations they offer are capable of interpretation in a micro-political sense. The literature about school management tends to focus on the head as the wielder of power, and the head's formidable powers of patronage are well documented. However, power is also exercised by middle managers over such issues as choice of syllabus, management of the budget, and implementation of school policy. The construction of the timetable and the allocation of teaching rooms, the contribution to references, promotions and appointments are all trappings of power and influence that are part of the middle manager's role. The right to intervene in disciplinary issues, and preferential access to the head are other ways in which middle managers exercise their power. Individual teachers in their classrooms are similarly engaged in the exercise of power over the children, making decisions on resources, syllabus and such apparently minor issues as where children sit.

Leadership is the way in which legitimated power is put into practice. The choice of an appropriate style of leadership (or management) is one of the most important decisions that faces the manager. Leadership is commonly regarded as a part of management, though some writers (Handy 1984) differentiate between leadership and administration, whilst others (Adair 1973) suggest that leadership is the core of management.

Handy's (1984) description of four organisational cultures, each with its own strengths and inherent weaknesses, is in reality a discussion about the way leaders choose to exercise their power. He makes clear that you rarely find a pure culture in a school. More usually the school

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is a mix of cultures, and different aspects of the management needs at a given time will call for a different culture to dominate.

Handy suggests schools should distinguish between leadership and administration rather than think in terms of management. He says:

Leadership includes the direction of the institution, the setting of its vision and its standards, and the oversight of its working. A leader does not just say to the administrator, get on with it, a leader initiates the structure, in leadership jargon, determines goals and priorities, chooses people and sets standards. (p35)

Handy also argues that leadership is not confined to the head, but runs through the entire organisation. The role of middle managers as key people in the leadership of the school, and in particular their influence on the morale of staff is an important part of this research. The individual faculties at Hillside appeared to have very different cultures. The quality of leadership and management provided by a faculty head made a material difference to the way faculty staff viewed the school.

Ball (1987) similarly postulates four leadership styles:

Forms of participation and types of talk in school decision-making			
Style	Form of participation	Response to opposition	Strategies of Control
Authoritarian	Prevents public access to voice opinion	Stifle	Insulation, concealment & secrecy
Managerial	Formal committees, meetings and working parties	Channel and delay	Structuring, planning control of agendas time and context
Interpersonal	Informal chats and personal consultation and lobbying	Fragment and compromise	Private performances of persuasion
Adversarial	Public meetings and open debate	Confront	Public performances of persuasion

However, although heads tend to one style, they are likely to use a range of styles on different occasions to achieve their goals.

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Adair (1973) develops Maslow's (1954) ideas about motivation. He emphasises the importance of the actions a leader, at whatever level in the organisation, takes to motivate and manage their team. He talks of the three primary tasks of management being:

- * to accomplish the task,
- * to maintain the unit,
- * to meet the needs of the individual unit member.

The support of the members of the unit, the individuals who perform the task, is important and the influence of Maslow's theories of motivation run through the work. Adair dismisses leadership definition by function as inadequate. He expresses a belief that the actions the manager performs and how s/he performs them is a vital factor in developing successful management. Adair concludes that the leader:

is a person with certain qualities of personality and character, which are appropriate to the general situation and supported by a degree of relevant technical knowledge and experience, who is able to provide the necessary functions to guide a group towards the further realisation of its purpose whilst maintaining and building its unity as a team. (p15)

Edwin P. Smith, (1973), reflects Adair's views. He suggests that the actions of the leader in one area of need affect the other areas, and that the humanity of the leader is also important. Personal integrity rather than professional skill is seen as the key, and leadership the balancing of group, task and individual needs. Meeting individual needs is, therefore, clearly seen as an important aspect of the leader's role.

Both these writers recognise that leadership cannot be exercised in a vacuum, and that every action the leader takes has implications for the led, and therefore for their morale. Everard (1986) proposes that:

the exercise of personal leadership or the management of the ethos of the school is widely accepted as a crucial activity for the Head, whose influence thereby on the effectiveness of the school is very great indeed...it is specially important for (educational) leaders to practice a style of management that will help to sustain morale and increase self respect. (p122)

He suggests that in business there is a positive attitude to management and quotes Sir John Harvey Jones:

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Management is essentially about people, about the organisation of people, about obtaining their commitment to worthwhile commonly shared values and objectives. (p123)

These studies of leadership suggest that if leaders are to accomplish the task, staff have to be managed effectively. The management of morale is therefore a critical element in the development of any management approach, as all management decisions, whether planned or not, impinge on the morale of the staff affected by them.

Staff and morale

I now turn to consider morale in the context of people at different levels in an organisation, looking at headteachers, middle managers and assistant teachers.

The role of the headteacher

HMI suggest in *Ten Good Schools* (1977) that:

What (good schools) all have in common is effective leadership and a climate that is conducive to growth....The foundation of their work and corporate life is an acceptance of shared values.

Emphasis is laid on consultation, team-work and participation, but without exception, the most important single factor in the success of these schools is the quality of leadership of the head. Without exception, the heads have qualities of imagination and vision, tempered by realism, which have enabled them to sum up not only their present situation, but also attainable future goals.

They appreciate the need for specific educational aims, both social and intellectual, and have the capacity to communicate these to staff, pupils and parents, to win their assent and to put their own policies into practice.

Their sympathetic understanding of staff and pupils, their accessibility, good humour and sense of proportion and their dedication to their task has won them the respect of parents, teachers and taught. They are conscious of the corruption of power and though ready to take final responsibility they have made power-sharing the keynote of their organisation and administration. Such leadership is crucial for success and these schools are what their heads have made them. (p35)

The way staff feel about their work is seen to make a major contribution to the effective operation of the school.

Everard (1986) describes the management of morale as part of the leadership responsibility:

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Heads, as leaders, are responsible for maintaining morale. Low self esteem among teachers cannot continue unchecked without jeopardising the effectiveness of the school and of the education service at large. (p89)

Perhaps the most significant review of school effectiveness comes from the Task Force study by Bolam, McMahon, Pocklington and Weindling for the DFE in 1993. Their very thorough survey of teacher attitudes shows that in the most effective schools the headteacher and staff have a shared vision. Staff are involved in developing aims and policy, which most of them understand and support. The management team think and plan strategically, are pro-active and keen to stay in the forefront of change.

They describe the heads of these schools as providing strong leadership, having a clear vision and a consultative listening style. S/he is highly visible in the school and easily accessible to staff, showing concern for staff well being. The successful head motivates the staff and regularly expresses appreciation for their work. S/he is well organised and in touch with events in the school and encourages staff to think about their own continuing professional development, possibly through an annual career review. The senior management team work well together as a team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. They are also highly visible and approachable. Communication between the senior management and the rest of the staff is frequent, direct and open.

The researchers found that most teachers wanted a combination of firm and coherent leadership and consultation over policy matters that directly affected their working lives, rather than over detail. The effective school was likely to have good team spirit and effective support structures, so that teachers faced with problems felt they were supported. The staff felt they were valued and their professional development was important.

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They described effective management as formulating a clear vision, ideally arrived at collaboratively and shared by the staff, creating an open school culture and providing strong purposeful leadership. They did comment, however, that the decision-making process seemed to be more problematic in secondary than primary schools, perhaps reflecting their greater size and complexity.

There are a number of works that deal with the role of the head and the effect that their style has on the school. (Barry and Tye 1972; Lyons 1976; Peters 1976; Jennings 1977). These and other studies show the range and variety of the head's task, and comment on different management styles.

Lloyd (1985) identifies the 'extended professional' as the best type of leader. S/he typically regards the school as a shared task in which all staff should have a voice through consultation and shared decision-making. This reflects the way the head was trying to develop management at Hillside.

Hewton (1988b) says heads use their knowledge of management style to create a positive climate for change. Hegarty (1983) describes the way that the school leader's role is changing from traditional headship to a situation where role definitions are continually evolving. School leaders have constantly to be asking themselves what they should be doing, and coping with innovations generated from outside the school.

This section has examined the literature on management in general and school management in particular. It suggests that management often focuses on structures and organisations (task management) rather than the management of staff. The “human relationships” school of

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thought recognises that the way staff feel about their work is important for the successful achievement of the school's aims. Schools need to accept the validity of both points of view. All the studies quoted share the perception that successful headship involves developing a vision and sharing it with the staff, so that they too become participants in the enterprise. The essence of this approach lies in the fact that the leader has to talk to his/her staff and turn them into a team if the shared vision is to be achieved. Sharing a vision takes management out of the realm of theory and politics and puts it in the realm of inter-personal relationships. The successful head is able to build strength through unity, and although, as Ball (1987) observes, there will be other political inter-actions going on, the overall sense of commitment is achievable. The alternative is to make a school a bureaucracy or a dictatorship. Both these methods can be effective for running organisations that focus on managing objects. Schools are concerned with managing people, and such methods are inappropriate and morally dubious in an institution that has the social and spiritual development of young people as part of its basic task.

The head, as the literature makes clear, has great power. How he/she chooses to use that power can determine whether conflict is minimised, and whether the ruling ethos of the school is professional or confrontational.

The role of middle managers.

I now want to consider morale in the context of middle managers. Middle managers are important sectional leaders and adopt their own management style, just as any other leader does. Inevitably this means that middle managers also have an effect on the morale of their staff in their section.

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Lacey (1970) described heads of departments as having a formal responsibility to the head for the teaching of their subjects. They had a number of chores, e.g. organising the syllabus, ordering stock and stock-taking. They also had the power to allocate coveted teaching such as the top stream taking GCE and the sixth form.

At Hightown Grammar, heads of departments rarely called department meetings, and most departmental business was done over coffee or during odd breaks in the teaching timetable. It was understood that as a person rose in seniority within the school s/he was accepted as a person with an opinion that mattered and needed consulting. The development of seniority was marked by the accumulation of a number of minor chores and responsibilities that were also, to some extent, status enhancing.

This view of the middle manager as a more senior teacher, rather than a manager was challenged by both Marland (1971) and Blackburn (1983). They both identify a role for the middle manager as a manager, with responsibilities that include the welfare, career development and morale of their staff.

Ball (1987) describes middle managers as barons engaged in conflicts over budgets, power and status and the structure of the curriculum. They are engaged in part in a political struggle for influence and dominance. He suggests that middle managers need to look after the welfare and morale of their staff. Gaining the support of their staff, together with positive indicators of success, gives them a powerful political position. Access to the appointment and promotion decision-making is also important in establishing baronial power.

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He suggests that these power struggles are enacted through middle management meetings. He suggests that these meetings often only have a symbolic role in decision-making. They celebrate the ideology of participation and collective affirmation, although they are in reality vehicles for the performance of power and control rather than vehicles for deliberation.

Ball's language of confrontation creates an impression that all schools are riven with conflict, a view not borne out by my research. At Hillside, decisions about the allocation of budgets and time were a focus for discussion by the middle management group, and were arrived at relatively amicably. The underlying issues of power were present, but so too was the notion of co-operation and sharing in a joint enterprise. The head looked for consensus and gave professional trust to his middle managers. The mainsprings of conflict are, no doubt, present in all schools in the way Ball describes. The actions of the head, and the management style he/she chooses to adopt can either minimise or maximise the extent of that conflict.

The morale of assistant teachers

I now consider the way in which morale affects assistant teachers. Woods (1979) argues that teachers do not perform their professional duties in a vacuum. When the teacher cannot do his professional job without the right conditions, s/he adapts to a hidden pedagogy of survival. Teachers make a personal investment in their careers. When things go wrong, they face a survival problem. What is at risk is not only their physical, mental and nervous safety and well-being. Their continuance in professional life, future prospects, professional identity, way of life, status and self-esteem are all at risk. These are the products of an accumulating investment process that teachers are unwilling to sacrifice. To do so would challenge their essential self concept (Nias 1989). They therefore come to an accommodation and substitute their own pedagogy of survival for their career commitment. They look for ways of ensuring survival by

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absence and manipulation of the timetable. They fight to protect free periods, for survival becomes that bit harder if one is confronted by somebody else's extreme survival problem - a 'bad' form in 'bad' circumstances. Another alternative is to unload the worst troublemakers onto others or take days off school.

Woods describes laughter as:

the elixir by which teacher becomes person once more, and humanity and confidence is restored.
(p142)

He suggests that teachers take refuge in staffroom humour that can evaporate conflict. Humour ritualises the conflict between personal survival needs and the institutional demands. It characterises senior management as oppressors.

On occasions all attempts at ritualising conflicts through humour are ineffective. When the psychological and physiological state of the teacher is low, as it often is towards the end of a term, staffrooms are 'unhappy' places. Staff sectionalise, some going to the local pub, or to the department rooms, store-cupboards, the games field, or even home. When there is perceived to be injustice, humour is ineffective. When the professional equilibrium is undermined, conflict comes to the surface and cannot be mediated by humour. In one case Woods cites, the situation was only resolved by a member of staff leaving the school.

Lacey (1970) identified stratification of teaching staff at Hightown, with the staff structured into easily recognisable categories:

like a sandwich with a soft top, a soft bottom and a hard core or filling. The soft top were men in their fifties or sixties; the hard core were men in their thirties, and the soft bottom was made up of teachers in their first or second year of teaching. (p167)

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Jennifer Nias' (1980) research into job satisfaction in primary schools found that young teachers responded much more positively to a positive, pro-active leader. A positive leader sets teachers high professional standards, being dynamic but consultative in policy-making and actively supporting the development of individuals. She contrasts this leadership style with the passive, where the leader gives teachers more freedom than they want and offers no coherence to the school or support and guidance to individuals. Less frequent was the Bourbon style of leader who was seen as aloof, socially distant and authoritarian.

The positive head was associated with commitment, enthusiasm and idealism. By contrast, passive heads were seen to have little interest in the school or staff. She suggests that heads should be actively involved, both personally and professionally in all aspects of running a school. Nias concludes:

Most of those I interviewed genuinely wanted to teach well, but many felt that, because of passive leadership, they were dissipating their efforts. Their tendency, therefore, was to change jobs in search of effective positive leadership. If they failed in their attempts to find this, they either left teaching or contracted their horizons, concentrating on teaching their own classes...(They) were themselves conscious that they were contributing little or nothing to the school as a whole.

For many this became an additional source of frustration and discontent. Thus maximum job satisfaction went hand in hand with humane, but positive leadership, leadership to which teachers felt they were encouraged to contribute, but which gave them in return the chance to perform effectively the main role for which they believed they were employed. (p272)

Nias' work deals with recently qualified teachers in primary schools. The differences in size and scale in comparison with the secondary school are important. In a large secondary school the faculty or year staff group is similar in size to many primary schools. Teachers in secondary schools therefore have two or more leaders - the faculty head, the head of year and the head. The relationship is more complex, but there are strong similarities in staff reactions.

In a later study, Jennifer Nias, Geoff Southworth, and Robin Yeomans, in *Staff Relationships in the Primary School* (1989) investigated five primary schools that did not apparently have

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problems. They discovered that staff relationships were highly complex. Their organisation was based on a culture of collaboration that was rooted in the belief that individuals should be accepted and valued for themselves. The interdependence gave both diversity to the institution and resilience to the staff group. The collaborative culture was consciously initiated and fostered by the head, but its maintenance was largely a result of trivial actions that gave group cohesion. The researchers found that the role of the head in initiating and maintaining a culture of collaboration was closely related to his/her sense of identity with the school, even to the point of professional ownership, and a clear sense of purpose for the institution and the children in it. Although their research relates to primary rather than secondary schools, the key element is the interdependence of the staff. Primary schools may be smaller than secondary schools, but the team culture of the individual faculty with six or seven members, is very similar to the primary school in many ways. My research showed that the extent to which the faculty head was seen to care about his staff was important in determining the level of their morale and their perceptions of the institution.

The emphasis in both these studies is on developing a team approach, energising staff through personal involvement and commitment.

Blackburn, in an unpublished paper adapted from work by Nias (1980), shown overleaf, proposed that staff went through four different stages during their professional development. He proposed that teachers' attitudes have four dimensions: personal concerns; role models; significant relationships and a reference group. At the third stage teachers adopt one of three approaches. Some reject the school's values and substitute their own survival goals. Others stagnate, and accepting the salary and benefits of the job for the minimum input. A third group consolidates, seeking to improve their skills, perhaps as a stepping stone to stage 4.

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Blackburn’s Adaptation of Jennifer Nias’ work: from a course “Pastoral care in Action” in 1985						
	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3			Stage 4
			Rejection	Stagnation	Consolidation	
Personal concern.	Survival.	Improve practice. Confirm concepts.	Self-preservation.	Preserve high cost benefit i.e. little work for high pay.	Getting better at teaching.	Persist. Be a head.
Role model.	One teacher.	Selected from several.	Another rejecter.	Another stagnator.	Themselves.	An ideal teacher based on reading.
Significant other.	Validation. pupils.	Pupils, respected colleagues. (Not heads or advisers)	Spouse, parent.	Spouse, parent, pupils.	Pupils, congruent group in school.	Heads, advisers, officers, pupils. Other professionals with high ideals.
Reference group.	Pub, teacher, friend or relative.	None, or congruent group in school.	Outside school.	Outside school.	Keen staff.	Idealists, often in print. An action group, union, subject association or other professional group.

The picture that emerges here is of teaching staff stratified by age, experience, seniority and responsibility. Young enthusiastic teachers show strong commitment, but are easily discouraged by inappropriate leadership that fails to identify their personal needs and develop their professional expertise. Heads are able to tap into these structures by selecting a management style that recognises the importance and contribution that assistant staff can make to the school’s development and well being. Failing to adopt an appropriate style leads to disenchantment, and increased staff turnover. Survival becomes the main objective, and may

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ultimately manifest itself as conflict, with the head characterised as the enemy and staff estranged from the leadership. Such schools are not happy places in which staff and pupils feel valued and able to grow. They fail the moral test of adequate preparation of young people, by example, for the world of adult life (Bottery 1992).

Change

Here I examine morale in the context of change within schools. Woods (1979) suggests that routine imposes a structure on school life which pupils and teachers almost automatically come to accept, and serves as a basis for establishing control.

Teachers become addicted to routine and ritual. Once instituted, they are extremely difficult to get rid of. Rituals become associated with 'tradition' and 'ethos' and to change them means discontinuity and disjuncture. Routine is a narcotic, taken to soothe the nerves and mellow the situation. Once established, to do without it would involve the teacher in severe withdrawal symptoms. (p162)

Ball (1987) suggests that change in an organisation is almost certain to produce dissonance among individuals or groups within the membership. Innovation can threaten the self interests of individuals, vested interests may be threatened by a reorganisation of the distribution of resources, and the career prospects of individuals and groups be curtailed or diverted. Consequently innovation in schools is usually characterised by political conflict between advocates and opposition groups, with behind the scenes manoeuvres, lobbying, factional groupings, negotiations and compromises forming a part of the innovation process. However, change in policy does not necessarily mean change in practice, as the practice of the teacher's skills in the classroom is essentially a private transaction that the organisation has little control over.

Elliot-Kemp (1992) argues that schools need commitment from staff for any significant change. He reflected the management philosophy that the head at Hillside was keen to develop.

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David Thomas regularly sought to consult staff, and spoke more than once of his sense of frustration at the unwillingness of staff to accept this role.

Slater (1985) suggests there are two ways to manage change. One way is a rational approach using a research, development and dissemination model. An alternative political approach is through negotiation and bargaining. He proposes that the two systems are not mutually exclusive, and in a well-run organisation are likely to be complementary. He says that in teaching subordinates have the power to promote or deny change at classroom level. He argues that classroom success is the acid test of successful change, and the teacher, in his/her professional capacity, the final judge. This very much reflects the way the head at Hillside tried to operate, and the problems he faced. He was trying to change the culture of the school and used both methods in meetings.

A rational, consultative and collaborative model of change-management underpinned the development of the GRIDS project in the late eighties. The project aimed to support schools in a process of continuous review and development. Support by both The Schools Council and subsequently The School Curriculum Development Committee signalled a wide acceptance of the need to consult and involve teachers if change was to be managed successfully.

The selection of an appropriate management style is crucial if staff are not to be alienated or threatened by the way in which the head initiates and manages change. If change is introduced in an arbitrary way, staff uncertainty is likely to be increased. It will appear more threatening and undermine staff commitment and morale. This is likely to lead to staff seeking simple solutions to their problems, and expressing their concern in ritual symbolic discussion that focuses on administrative inefficiency or the maintenance of discipline amongst students.

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These issues recur regularly. They enable anxious staff to identify a way out of the uncertainty of change by going back to the old certainties that were part of a notional better time firmly lodged in the past, before change was proposed. Where such discussions take place in the public arena of the staff meeting, the potential for damage to staff morale is greatly increased.

Where change is introduced to accomplish a shared vision, and commands staff support, it is likely to be seen as a positive way of developing the school and professional expertise. It becomes an exciting and challenging opportunity in which the staff are partners in a shared enterprise. Through this process, staff are able to feel that they can influence the changes and therefore feel that they have a measure of ownership, and their morale is likely to be enhanced.

Government, LEAs and Industrial action

In this section I consider the effects of change introduced from outside the school, especially from the LEA and central government, and its effect on morale in school, especially in the context of the industrial action that dominated the early eighties when the fieldwork for this research was carried out.

Schools are not free agents independent of society. Indeed teachers' morale derives in part from their conception of themselves as valued public servants. Moves by local and central government in the early eighties shattered the traditional consensus and changed the nature of power relationships within the profession.

The influence of the LEA is discussed by Everard (1986). He says that many heads reported:

problems whose source lay in the LEA or the Education Committee. It was as though there was a passive acceptance of situations that were decided in County Hall, and a feeling not only of powerlessness in relation to these, but of acceptance of an immutable subordinate relationship of obedience. (p76)

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Lyons, Stenning and McQueeney (1983) considered the effects of the industrial action of 1982 on schools and found that the nature of school management had changed. They suggested that the traditional high degree of mutual accommodation and trust in schools was proving more and more difficult to sustain. By the time of their research schools were:

increasingly subject to social and economic pressures (which) make them more vulnerable...confront the head teacher and threaten the effective operation of the school. (p10)

They suggested schools experienced a considerable increase in the number, spate and complexity of staff management problems caused by ambiguity in the system with respect to employment relations matters. LEAs did not have, or systematically apply, coherent staff planning policies and Heads consistently and unequivocally expressed the belief that their autonomy and authority were being eroded.

Hellawell (1990) found that heads did not feel empowered to get rid of staff they considered should be dismissed. LEAs had been loathe to use procedures, and this lack of support could make the process very daunting and so uncertain in its outcomes that heads were often reluctant to commit the time and effort necessary to use it.

The general context of my research is illustrated by the HMI annual report published in 1986.

It referred to the previous year and was quoted in *The Times Educational Supplement* of 23

May 1986. It was highly critical of the effectiveness of education. The report identified:

a lack of teachers with the expertise to teach a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils at all levels of ability...In one third of schools visited Inset was regarded as inadequate.

Elsewhere, the inspectors reported that:

poor leadership and management at one or more levels were adversely affecting the quality of education. In one in twenty of schools visited, an improvement in morale was regarded as necessary if the quality of education was to improve.

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The HMI report concludes by saying:

Few involved in providing for education can take much pride, if any, in a national service within which three tenths of all lessons seen were unsatisfactory, one fifth was adversely affected by poor accommodation, a quarter was suffering from shortages of equipment.

Half the schools visited needed to widen the range of teaching styles to bring about a better match with what was being taught if the changes and improvements called for by national policies for education were to be achieved. The damaging effect of all this on pupil performance and on the teachers' morale and their ability and willingness to bring about much needed change, are showing themselves clearly.

The overall effect of this report was to suggest publicly a failure by teachers and LEAs to deliver a professional education service. This public criticism challenged the self-esteem of teachers, both as individuals and as a group.

Pietrasik (1987) describes the dispute from the point of view of the National Union of Teachers (NUT). He argues that the teaching profession had always been treated with respect and continually consulted by the Government on every aspect of schooling since 1945. In 1984 the Government sought to exert influence and control over the education service from Whitehall, and thereby destroy the partnership between central government, local education authorities and the teaching profession. The government restricted educational expenditure and abolished the School Council, an influential voice of teachers on all matters to do with the curriculum in England and Wales.

Thus Pietrasik (1987) and Ball (1993) suggest that the consequences of the government intervention of the eighties has been to exert new forms of control of schools through the curriculum, the market and management. Ball suggests that professional autonomy is reduced by these three controls. He suggests that government intervention in education has continued, and that there has been a polarisation between the values of professional responsibility and those of efficient management. Ball says:

teachers are the objects of management relegated to the status of human resources: they do not participate, they are not included in the partnership; they are there to be managed. It is heads and

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governing bodies... and the client-parents who are empowered by the Education Reform Act. The teacher is caught and crushed in the nexus between management and the market. (p118)

Grace (1991) discusses the upheavals of the eighties and argues that:

the professional gains made by the teachers over a long historical period were either weakened or eliminated by the action of the central state in education...A series of radical interventions by state agencies was experienced by teachers as an aggressive attack upon the nature and status of teacher professionalism, the place of teachers in decision making and the very essence of teaching as work. (p3)

The consequence of this shattering of the professional aspirations of teachers was recognised by the Interim Advisory Committee on School Teacher Pay and Conditions (The Chilver Report 1988). They found:

a great deal of evidence of low morale in the teaching force...the profession of teaching is one of the most important in our society. It is disturbing then, that many teachers feel that their profession and its work are misjudged and seriously undervalued. (pvii.)

Cole and Walker (1989) described the process as a crisis for British teachers because:

both their intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are under attack. The decline in...pay is annoying...in that it is seen as evidence that teachers' professional worth is not recognised. Declining recognition and respect attacks the teachers' own identity and the sense of his or her own personal worth...teachers see the ideology of their profession, again a source of identity and the sense of personal worth, under concentrated attack by the government.(p166)

In other words, it would appear that low morale has a dysfunctioning and disabling effect on the institution if allowed to deteriorate to any great degree. This issue is addressed in Chapter 11, which examines the whole concept of morale within the school in some detail.

Industrial Action and the Head

Lyons et. al. (1983) found that there was little devolution of staff management matters to senior staff, who appeared reluctant to take on this role. They suggested that there was a need for staff management thinking to become central to the day to day management of the school

They argue that:

a new professional consensus must be forged between heads and staff...developing mutual understanding and fostering a sense of common purpose among the adult community of the school. (p13)

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They go on to suggest that failing to develop such a consensus would have serious consequences:

In the absence of such discussions it would seem that the authority and credibility of the head teacher will become increasingly difficult to sustain. (p13)

Pietrasik (1987) described how the conflict led to strike action, which in turn led to bitter differences between teachers, and between teachers and Headteachers in the schools. Heads felt that they had to keep the schools running as normally as possible. In trying to do this they often strayed into the area of undermining the teachers' action. In secondary schools senior members of staff, rather than allow pupils to be sent home, were doing all the cover. Classes that teachers had refused to cover were herded into the hall with the Head or Deputy supervising a number of classes at once. Teachers from other associations (PAT; AMMA) were often taking on the cover that members of the NUT and NAS/UWT had refused to do.

Ball (1988) suggests that the style and stance of the headteacher clearly emerged as a significant factor in determining the nature and conduct of the dispute. Where heads were perceived to not support the staff, e.g. by closing the school or making arrangements to supervise classes of absent colleagues, feelings of "them and us" increased markedly. Any sense of professional-collegiate working relationship between staff and headteacher was drastically eroded. In secondary schools heads were seen as identifying with the local education authority, the employers. In some cases carefully constructed rhetorics of collaboration and consensus nurtured over many years were dramatically shattered. When heads failed to support their staff over industrial action, the traditional claims of professional authority of heads were replaced by antagonism based on the industrial relations of waged labour. This seemed to surprise the heads concerned. Unions represented different interests and alliances of interests, and all were not necessarily working toward the same ends. Conflicts among staff were often

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identified with long term micro-political divisions and different union membership. On occasions the dispute served to activate a variety of issues already present; disgruntlements were focused and old scores settled. Tensions were laid bare by the dispute. Most teachers linked the conduct of the dispute, and the problems arising from it, directly with the organisational culture and educational ethos of the school. The cutting edge of the dispute seemed to be forged by local conditions and experiences rather than by general principles. This view is reflected by Hart (1990):

It appears that a critical limit has been reached and that they (heads) can no longer rely on the authority of their position to manage their staff. They must have well developed and well-rounded managerial skills in order to become effective managers of increasingly complex school environments. (p41) Quoted in Ball (1988).

One consequence of the government's action and the aftermath of the dispute was a change in the nature of relationships between headteachers and their staff. Hellowell (1990) also found evidence of the development of "us" and "them" attitudes in the primary school. Heads were increasingly seen as management figures by their staffs, rather than as fellow members of the teaching team. He suggests that the dispute was a national backcloth against which other school issues were played out between 1984 and 1987. He suggests that this had been a matter of intense concern to many teachers and head teachers. It was also seen by many to be part of the general relationship between the government and the teachers

Hellowell suggests that in some schools the imposed pay settlement made staff see heads less as professionals and more as line managers. What might have been interpreted previously as professional criticism was now more likely to be viewed as managerial interference or checking. The reduction in teachers professional authority may have been initiated at government level. However, the headteacher was the individual who was seen by the class

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teacher as their representative. As heads attempted to implement the new contract they are inevitably going to be seen as the representative of a higher control in this respect.

He argues that, where union action was strong, it tended to increase the psychological gap between heads and their staff. The dispute also tended to make the head's role more directive and top down in nature. It is hard to claim you are a member of a teaching team when you are the one who has to see that conditions of employment are implemented. The teachers are aware that the conditions have been imposed upon them without their agreement.

Hellawell found that some heads appeared to be fighting a rearguard action against the potential effects on their role of the dispute and its legislative aftermath. For many heads the dispute and its after-effects increased the pressures to make heads more and more the chief executive and less and less the leading professional. The industrial dispute appeared to be a watershed in head-staff relationships.

In summary

What I have been trying to demonstrate in this chapter is that the issue of morale is central to an understanding of the changes in schools since the eighties. Morale is a multi-functional issue, easily affected by apparently insignificant decisions on a local scale, and essential to the well-being of the staff who make up the motive power of education. Thus morale is affected by the headteacher, either consciously or unconsciously, depending on the strategies they adopt. However, morale in schools is also affected by a series of influences outside the school. The social esteem of teachers, their sense of professionalism, and their standing in society are all part of their morale.

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Actions by the government and the media in the eighties undermined that morale significantly. In doing so they brought national political issues into the micro-political environment of the school. Heads were challenged to make a stand with their staff against the external forces or risk rupturing the unity of their schools.

Where headteachers were well established and had good relationships with their staff through consultative machinery, the effects of the dispute were minimised. At Hillside the head was engaged in change. Change in itself is threatening to staff, carrying as it does implications of change in the balance of individual and group power, and a consequent change in public status and morale. This meant that Hillside was poorly prepared for the action that hit all schools in the eighties. The consequences were difficult for all concerned, fracturing the staff consensus and alienating a significant proportion of the staff from the leadership.

CHAPTER 6

HILLSIDE SCHOOL

Introduction

This chapter describes the general location and catchment area of Hillside school. It examines the management style of the first head, John Robinson, and the period of uncertainty following his departure when the school was run by two successive acting heads. It discusses the appointment of David Thomas, his view of the way the school management should be developed, and the effect of these changes on the morale of staff in the school. The data of this chapter is based on interview.

The School

Hillside School opened in 1970 in new buildings and on an extensive site. It was a small comprehensive school of approximately 600 pupils from a very mixed catchment area. Victorian terraced houses and recent housing developments for owner occupiers surrounded the school, including a large private housing estate on its doorstep. Suburban villages of essentially owner-occupied private housing made up most of the rest of the catchment area. The school was also available as a choice for pupils in the neighbouring division who were nearer to Hillside than to schools in their own division.

John Robinson

The head of this new and developing school was John Robinson. A tall and dominant character, he had a very firm discipline and close control of the school, which largely reflected the club culture of management described by Handy (1984).

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In a club culture, the head of the organisation is the key. Club cultures tend to be dominated by the head who develops a strong central group of like-minded people. One of the features of John Robinson's leadership was the creation of a strong senior management team consisting of the head, two deputies and subsequently, heads of Upper and Lower School. This inner cabinet, with the addition of the Senior Teacher (Bursar), made policy decisions that were then presented to heads of departments and staff meetings.

Handy suggests that club cultures are rich in personality and their own mythology. The strength of this culture is its ability to respond immediately and intuitively to crises because of the very short lines of communication and because of the centralisation of power. He suggests that the key to success in a club culture is the strength and unity of the core team.

Stories of John Robinson's actions were regularly repeated several years after he had left. The strength of leadership that his style of management provided was compared to the new management style adopted by David Thomas, not always favourably. The shortcomings of a club culture were also apparent to staff who worked with him. Middle managers had little freedom of action. There was a very strong sense of an In-Group and an Out-Group, and staff who felt ill at ease with this style of management were unlikely to stay long.

Under John Robinson's leadership, the school grew steadily from 600 to 950 pupils, the increased roll coming mainly from parents outside the catchment area who wished their children to come to Hillside. The old Hillside school had been a small and close community. The rapid expansion of the new school and the appointment of a large number of additional new staff changed the balance of the staff room. It became a very young almost entirely graduate staff and their views of the teaching profession were largely shaped by their

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experiences at Hillside. The young staff included a number of people with considerable ambition, who since 1970 have been promoted, as would be expected. His style of strong leadership allowed the school to flourish and pupils to achieve considerable success in public exams. This period of expansion coincided with the golden opportunities for teachers in the 1970s, when staff were able to gain rapid promotion in an expanding educational system. Most of the heads of department and heads of faculty, who received scale 4 salaries, were in their late twenties and early thirties. By the end of the 1970s, the climate was changing. Falling rolls, cuts in spending and increasing unemployment amongst teachers coincided with the Houghton and Clegg settlements that tended to stabilise movement within the profession.

Under John Robinson, management was closely controlled from the centre. He created six major academic faculties: Humanities; Creative Arts; Languages; Maths; Science; and Physical Education, and appointed young and ambitious staff as faculty heads. He laid down the key policy decisions and directions for the school and insisted they were implemented. A decision that all faculties should develop Mode 1 and Mode 3 CSE courses in response to the raising of the school leaving age to 16 was made at the centre. The decision that all classes should be taught in mixed ability groups was also taken centrally. Faculty heads had little real power to make decisions about faculty policy.

There was a strong emphasis on discipline and pastoral work, and the school's power base lay in this area. The deputies' responsibilities were initially allocated to Upper and Lower School, but without any specific responsibility except in a pastoral and disciplinary sense. The year heads were experienced staff with either head of department responsibilities or teachers of considerable experience and expertise, and they were either on scale 3 or 4.

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As the school expanded, the internal promotion routes seemed to be mainly through the pastoral system. The senior team was expanded to include heads of Upper and Lower School at senior teacher level in addition to two deputy heads and a senior teacher (Bursar). One head of department, who was also responsible for a year group, became head of Upper School. He was promoted subsequently to be deputy head, aspired to and ultimately obtained the headship of his own school. Another head of department swapped a subject for a year group responsibility and became senior teacher with pastoral duties. The heads of Upper and Lower School left to become heads of other schools. Another head of department became head of Lower School, a deputy head post. During the same period no heads of departments or heads of faculty were appointed to promoted posts with an academic bias either inside or outside the school. The maintenance of discipline and good behaviour were seen as a main concern and this helped create an ordered framework in which the class teaching could take place.

The teachers' unions in the school had little influence. The relative inexperience of the staff, and the position of the school as an expanding institution with possibilities for internal promotion gave the head power through patronage and force of personality. During the early and mid 70s, when staff mobility was far easier, this style of management worked effectively.

The school enjoyed a good reputation. Some staff perceived the price of this success to be increased pressure on staff and pupils. Discipline was perceived to be largely concentrated in the hands of the senior management team.

In July 1979 John Robinson was appointed to the headship of another school. Most of the staff had been at Hillside for a number of years. Many had only limited experience of other schools, and were accustomed to strong, centralised leadership. The senior management team

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had been expanded to include heads of Upper and Lower school, and the school had almost doubled in size. What was immediately apparent was that the departure of such a strong and dominant character was likely to lead to some feelings of insecurity amongst the staff. A delay in appointing a successor exacerbated the problem and the interregnum made staff anxious about standards and their own position. Anxiety about discipline, which surfaced most frequently over the issue of uniform, was tempered to some extent by the sense of release of pressure on both pupils and staff. The school relaxed during that period, though the discipline did not immediately fall apart as a result.

David Thomas

For the next year, the school was run by two deputies as acting heads, both of whom were appointed to headships within that period. One other senior member of staff was also appointed to a headship shortly after. David Thomas, who took over the school in 1980, faced a number of problems immediately. A year of uncertainty had made the staff uneasy and affected their morale.

The departure of a number of the senior staff within eighteen months affected the character of the school, and the staff had to adapt to a new style of leadership. By this time Houghton and Clegg had stabilised the profession and falling rolls made teachers look to their futures. Cuts in spending were beginning to bite deeply and the effects of falling rolls on morale were beginning to be recognised. The impressionable and enthusiastic junior staff that John Robinson had appointed were now more experienced teachers who saw their routes of promotion being gradually closed off.

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David Thomas had very different views about the style of leadership. His leadership style had much of the person culture, with great emphasis on the professionalism of staff. He saw a need to allow middle managers, particularly faculty heads, significantly greater freedom than they had enjoyed under John Robinson. Within the first two years of his headship, he was able to significantly restructure his middle management team, and in doing so changed the balance of power in the school. As experienced heads of year left they were replaced by internal appointments of relatively junior staff whom he wished to retain. They were paid less than faculty heads, and less than heads of year when John Robinson was head. This change in the emphasis of the school is explored in Chapters 10 and 12, when the relative status of middle managers is discussed.

Heads of faculty were appointed externally, and their increased freedom enhanced their power and status in the school, partly at the expense of the heads of year. The development of a faculty block timetable gave them greater effective power over their staff. They also enjoyed greater freedom to make decisions themselves that would have been made at the centre by the previous head. They regarded themselves as almost completely autonomous, and empowered to make far reaching decisions independently and without reference to the Head, even when the decision might have an effect on whole-school issues. In this way the balance of power was perceived to swing strongly towards the faculty heads and away from heads of year. The change was confirmed by the change in promotion patterns. Under David Thomas, it was faculty heads who obtained promotion, both to senior positions internally, and to senior positions in other schools. If the system under John Robinson had identified senior staff and pastoral heads as the significant In-Group, the position was now reversed. Heads of year were perceived to be an Out-Group, and heads of faculty the new In-Group. The effect of this change of power and status is at the heart of the discussion about staff morale.

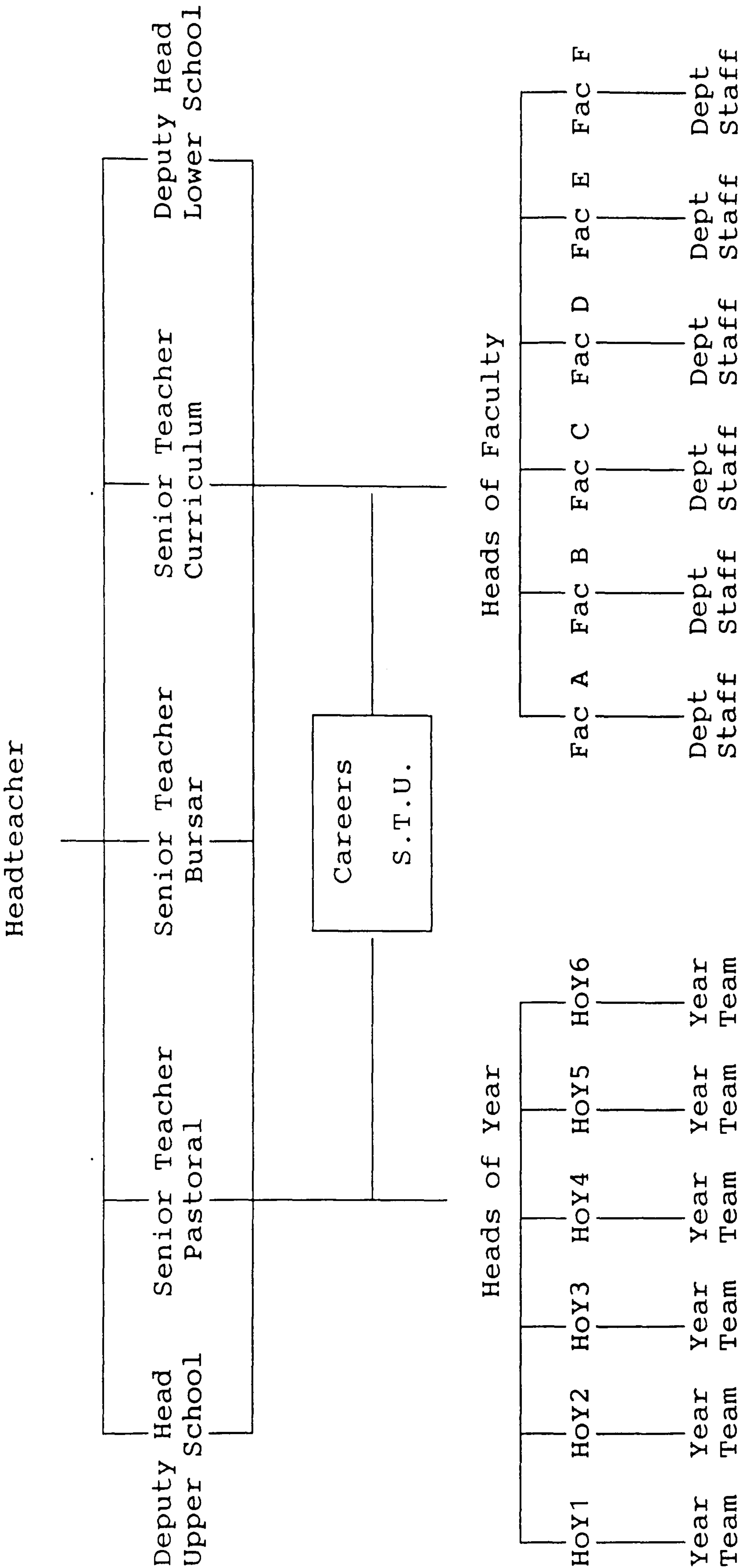
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One of David Thomas's first concerns was to relax the tension and stress on the pupils and staff, and create a more informal and friendly atmosphere in school. He was anxious to reassure staff about discipline and standards at the same time as changing the way they were enforced. He felt very strongly that the standards should be maintained by what he saw as a firm but friendly discipline.

Similarly, David Thomas wanted to change the way the school was managed. He thought that a school of over 900 pupils needed a more democratic leadership, with the opportunities for senior staff, heads of faculty and heads of year to have an influence on the formation of policy. (The management structure he developed at Hillside School is shown on the next page.)

He was very strongly in favour of a consensus management style and saw the process of consultation as a key method of achieving it. In this connection, he was keen that faculty heads become more than mere defenders of the sectional interests, and became instead planners and managers of the school's affairs. He saw the problem in terms of persuading faculty heads to take a wider view of school affairs than merely a departmental one. He believed that the faculty head was at the heart of the communication system, acting as a channel for the passage of information between staff at all levels.

David Thomas wanted the staff to see that he led them by example, which he hoped they would follow, so that a consensus view of the school's functioning would emerge. He had some reservations about how effective this policy would be, and whether it would succeed. He was, however, determined not to be seen as a desk and office bound administrator cut off from the daily life of the school and inaccessible to the staff. To help keep in touch he regularly



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taught a few lessons. In one sense, his attempt to lead by example caused other difficulties. He took a large share in the supervision of the premises at lunch times, and therefore was not readily accessible to staff at that time. He also took an active part in supervising the departure of the pupils from the premises at the end of the day, so that again he was not available for staff to consult when they were free.

Perhaps the key definition of the way the head saw his role came in the middle management meeting in July 1982. He explained that he saw the middle management of the school as a decisive factor in the decision-making process. He described his position as one in which he delegated authority to others, both individually and as a corporate body, and trusted them to carry out their responsibilities. In his view this included a responsibility on middle management staff not only to inform staff about what decisions had been taken, but also about the reasons for the decisions.

David Thomas was not sure how easily he would be able to develop this view of leadership in school. He felt that the staff wanted to be told what to do to a much greater extent than he wished.

From 1984, events outside the school played an increasing part in David Thomas' attempts to develop a new management style. Cuts in spending by the LEA affected Hillside in a number of ways. Later that year the industrial dispute over pay and conditions led to teacher strikes and other actions that disrupted the day to day running of the school.

These five key events and their effects are shown in the diagram below, which is best read from left to right.

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Key events at Hillside School 1983-1986			
Event	Consequence	Effect	Effect on morale
Change of middle management meetings. February 1983	Influence of faculty heads increased. Influence of year heads reduced.	Senior year heads show signs of estrangement; behaviour management becomes an issue at staff meetings.	Year heads become a focus for discontent; behaviour is perceived to deteriorate.
LEA spending cuts. January 1984	Supply cover; cleaning; travel expenses in-service training all become issues.	Staff meetings become overshadowed by LEA actions.	Division emerges between senior staff and assistant staff over school response.
National industrial action. Apr-Jun 1984	All meetings cancelled.	All development work stops.	Morale is badly affected by perceived deterioration in working conditions: cleaning, supply cover etc.
Change of senior management: change in salary levels of new year heads. September 1984	Faculty heads promoted to senior teacher; senior pastoral staff leave.	Academic side of school increase in importance; heads of year estrangement increases.	Faculty heads and senior staff increase in significance to assistant staff.
National industrial action. Dec. 1984 - Jan 1986	All meetings cancelled.	All development work stops. Pink Paper produced.	Morale continues to be badly affected by perceived deterioration in working conditions: cleaning, supply cover etc. Staff become bitterly divided on union lines.

In summary

This chapter has examined the changes that affected Hillside School in the early eighties. It describes the catchment area of the school and the leadership style of the previous head. It goes on to describe the uncertainty felt by some staff when that head left and there was a long period of acting headship, followed by the appointment of a head committed to changing the school's management style. It describes the uncertainties that the new head faced. Most of the existing senior management team had left before he took up his appointment. Education had begun to become an area of political concern with the speech by the then Prime Minister, James Callaghan at Ruskin College, Oxford, in October 1976. The Houghton and Clegg pay settlements were about to make an impact on staff movement, and falling rolls were about to cause problems for professional development and school viability.

CHAPTER 7

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

This chapter examines the way in which Aims and Objectives were developed and the extent to which staff felt the aims and objectives accurately reflected what was happening in the school. It goes on to consider the extent to which Aims and Objectives helped to generate a common sense of purpose and developed the commitment of staff. It considers the value of common aims and objectives in the development of a whole school vision and the creation of a united staff team. It goes on to consider the role of Aims and Objectives in the development of morale at Hillside School. The chapter is based on questionnaire and interview data.

Ten Good Schools (HMI 1977) proposed that:

good schools take trouble to make their philosophies explicit for themselves and explain them to parents and pupils; the foundation of their work and corporate life is an acceptance of shared values (p35)

Bolam et. al. (1993) suggest that:

effectively managed schools have a shared vision about the school's future development and a plan about how to move in this direction. The "vision" is regularly referred to and reviewed, but is reasonably consistent over time.

Staff are involved in developing aims and policy for the school, which most of them understand and support. (p3)

Williams (1984) makes clear that two of the key components of morale are Group Cohesion and Adventurous Striving (see Chapter 5, p56). These elements represent the way that teachers co-operate and feel united in striving to achieve the school's goals. Developing a common sense of purpose through a shared agreement of the school's aims and objectives would appear to be a useful first step in developing a shared vision. The involvement of all staff in the process of turning the vision into reality is a key factor in the development of a successful

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school. One way to achieve this sense of community of purpose is through the writing of aims and objectives.

However, the production of a statement of aims and objectives for a school does not necessarily mean that the staff have subscribed to the vision or are united by its sense of purpose. The extent to which staff are involved in the process of developing aims and objectives is likely to have a significant effect on their sense of ownership of the school's vision, and affect the morale of the staff within it.

School Aims & Objectives

In 1980 the LEA requested all its schools to draw up statements of aims and objectives. Hillside School produced two sets of statements. Firstly there was a statement of the fundamental principles on which the school was organised; secondly there was a statement of the Aims and Objectives for the whole school. The fundamental principles numbered twenty different statements and the final statement summed up the principles on which the school operated as aiming to produce people who:

- (a) are aware of their potential
- (b) are trying to fulfil it
- (c) care deeply about other human beings
- (d) think sufficiently about society to want to improve it
- (e) are capable of warm human relationships
- (f) are resilient in the face of set backs and frustration
- (g) will be able to cope quite happily with the ever increasing speed of change in a modern technological society.

The Aims and Objectives document says that there are three over-riding aims that are of equal significance:

1. Academic aims: to provide a broad well balanced curriculum through which every child will be encouraged to learn the various forms of knowledge so that he/she develops the skills and acquires the qualifications that will help him/her make a positive response to the demands of living in a rapidly changing world.

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2. Pastoral aims: to provide a caring environment in which every child irrespective of his/her academic ability, is encouraged to realise his/her full personal potential and learns to value other people as individuals.
3. Experiential aims: to provide appropriate challenges for every child so that he/she learns the joy of success and how to cope with failure, and can understand and accept changes within his/her own personal life and society.

To achieve these aims the school established the following objectives:

1. To provide a well qualified and caring staff able to successfully communicate their enthusiasm for their particular subjects and encourage their pupils' interest in their subject.
2. To provide every child with an opportunity to develop personal relationships within his/her peer group and with members of staff through their form tutor and extracurricular activities.

The document goes on to describe the school's organisation into faculties for academic organisation, and year groups for pastoral care. It emphasises the importance of a well ordered and caring environment as the framework for the learning process.

Staff attitudes to aims and objectives: the first questionnaire: 1982

I asked the staff about the school's aims and objectives in four questions in the 1982 questionnaire.

I asked staff what they thought the primary aims of the school were (q12). Twenty out of the 27 respondents identified an academic bias, and this view was shared across all levels of the staff.

I asked members of staff how they would summarise the school's aims (q13). The responses divided fairly evenly between achieving good exam results and a good public image, which received 12 out of 27 responses, and educating the whole person, which received 11. One faculty head commented that his response reflected his perception of the school's aims, which was the best possible exam results, but this did not represent his own view of the aims of education. The responses showed a stratified view. Senior staff saw the aims more in terms of

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the “whole individual” and preparation for the outside world, whilst more junior staff saw them as relating to academic success, which one described as:

a “grammar school” type of environment with little social development.

I asked staff if they thought the school was achieving its aims (q14). Two thirds of the respondents thought it was achieving its aims with most children, one third only with some children. There was a stratified view. A clear majority of senior staff thought the school was succeeding with most pupils. Only just over half the assistant staff shared this view. A significant number thought it was only successful with some children.

I asked staff what qualities in pupils they thought it was most important to develop (q15). Of the choices I offered, self confidence was seen as the most important, attracting 86 responses out of a total of 325, about 26%. The ability to mix and academic success were seen as of equal importance, each attracting 18% of responses. Preparation for the world of work and politeness achieved about 13% of the responses. Fourteen other suggestions were put forward. The only one to attract several mentions was sensitivity and consideration, which attracted 12% of the responses. Self reliance and social awareness were each mentioned twice. All others were mentioned by only one respondent.

The question showed that the more senior staff were much less willing to list qualities, and perhaps it was a poor question. I was hoping to check the extent to which staff's views of the aims of the school (q13) were cross referenced by answers to this question. Answers to q13 suggested that the overall perception was academic success. Staff views of the important things the school should achieve were seen much more in terms of personal qualities and skills. The question also related to a question asked in interview, which drew a very similar response.

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Staff attitudes to aims and objectives: the second questionnaire: 1984.

I asked staff what they thought the primary aims of the school were (q12). There was very little change from the 1982 questionnaire; if anything the academic bias showed more clearly. I asked members of staff how they would summarise the school's aims (q13). There was a change of view in response to this question. Middle management staff now saw the aims of the school in the same way as more junior staff. Academic success was the seen as the dominant aim. The wider view of education was recognised as an aim by a higher proportion of senior staff.

I asked staff if they thought the school was achieving its aims (q14). The results were only marginally different in the 1984 survey. There was still a stratified view. Some respondents missed parts of the last page of the questionnaire as they were new to the school and felt unable to comment, which is why the results for q13 to q17 have different totals.

I asked staff what qualities in pupils they thought it was most important to develop (q15). In the 1984 survey, 26% of respondents identified developing the ability to mix as the most important aim; 25% identified self confidence, and 21% quoted academic skills. Job preparation and politeness attracted 17% each of the responses. Twelve other suggestions were put forward. The only one to attract several mentions was social responsibility, which attracted 8% of the responses. Understanding was mentioned twice. All others were mentioned only by one respondent.

The staff who replied to the questionnaire indicated that they thought the main aims of the school were the achievement of good academic results and the development of a positive school image that followed from examination success. The education of the "whole person"

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was regarded as important by half the staff who responded, and this view was stronger amongst more senior staff. Most staff thought the school was achieving its aims with most children. Staff felt that the school should also help students prepare for the world of work, both through exam success and the development of self confidence and social skills.

First Interviews: 1983

The three stated aims of the school, Academic, Pastoral and Experiential were not seen as equal in status by staff. Salary levels and staff perceptions suggested that academic aims were seen as more important, with faculty heads paid on a higher scale than heads of year.

In the first series of interviews, faculty heads reported that they had been involved in the discussion and writing of the aims and objectives document, and thought that the aims of the school were similar to the aims of their faculty, for which they were largely responsible.

One faculty head said:

The aims of the school are largely the same as the aims of the faculty, which I was largely responsible for.

One experienced assistant teacher said:

I was involved in writing the faculty's aims. I feel the aims are broadly in agreement with their own ideas and were acceptable to them.

The more junior assistant staff explained that they had not been involved in the aims and objectives exercise. A typical comment was:

I've seen the school aims written in the school prospectus and the staff handbook. I haven't really given it much thought. I read it a long time ago, when I came. I wasn't involved in writing them and I don't think they are of great practical value.

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Most staff thought that the school placed great emphasis on behaviour, dress and exam results. Several said they would like to see more emphasis on pastoral care. They described the school as traditional and conservative with a small c. One of the junior assistant staff said:

The school is exam orientated. The staff are consistent in their views that exams are important. I would like to see more emphasis on pastoral care.

An Established Assistant teacher said:

I can't remember the aims and objectives, there were so many of them. I would describe the school as geared up to exams and academic work.

Staff from middle management down were critical of the way the aims were worded. They said that the aims were worded so that:

you can read into them almost whatever you like.

Another commented that:

They are a pretty bland statement that you can't really disagree with.

Another described them as:

so vague and general that you can't really disagree with them. They probably do reflect the work going on in school, within the constraints of resources.

The impression from the first series of interviews was that faculty heads were involved in writing their faculty aims, as were some assistant staff. The staff who had been involved in writing the school's aims and objectives identified closely with them. More junior staff, or staff who had arrived after the exercise had been completed, were less familiar with the aims, and did not identify with them in the same way. Many felt that the writing of the aims and objectives document was a paper exercise conducted to satisfy the LEA, and that it made little difference to the way the school operated. They thought that the final document was so broad that few people could really disagree. There was a general view that the equal status of the three aims did not translate into practice, with academic success being seen as more important than the pastoral and experiential aims.

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Early in 1984 HMI made a surprise visit to the school as part of a project to examine aims and objectives, and relate them to achievement in the school. The Head asked the faculty heads to compile a matrix to correlate their aims and objectives against their assessment and evaluation techniques.

In September 1984 the deputy head reminded the Academic Board that that HMI had been critical of the gap between aims and objectives and their use in practice. He suggested that what went on in classrooms should be seen as fulfilling the school's aims and objectives. The minutes of the meeting say that:

We need to correlate all our documents, syllabus, aims, etc. We must ask the question: "Are our objectives being tested?"

It was agreed that each faculty would submit a completed matrix to the Head by the end of term. There was no suggestion that the aims of the school as a whole should be reviewed, nor was any mechanism developed to do so.

Industrial action began in December 1984, so the results of this review were not published during the period of my research.

Second interviews: 1985/86

There was little change in the school's aims between the two series of interviews, except that there was a realisation that they ought to address the needs of the less able pupils more fully. The general impression from most staff was still that the school's aims were difficult to disagree with as they were so broad and could be all things to all people. They had not been rewritten or reviewed during the two year interval. One member of staff said:

the aims of the school are still the same.

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Others suggested the aims had little practical effect on their daily lives as:

the defined aims get lost in day to day issues.

However, there had been some review of faculty aims. The head of faculty A explained that he had developed new work schemes with a colleague, to:

give staff a greater guideline about what we ought to be teaching

Faculty B had changed significant areas of its syllabus and the way it organised teaching groups. In faculty D the discussion of aims and objectives was a significant tool in developing faculty relationships. Staff in all three faculties commented favourably on their involvement in policy-making, and in their eyes a review of the faculty's policy made a significant contribution to their morale. The effect of these discussions is considered in greater detail in Chapter 12.

Developments in education also affected the staff's view. They thought:

the stress of running the school and the shortage of finance detaches the school from its aims and objectives.

They described GCSE as:

an important development that has increased the emphasis on the academic work of the school.

One change that began to emerge more clearly was the division of the assistant staff into two distinct groups. One group, whom I shall refer to as the Junior Assistant Staff, were predominantly younger staff with shorter experience in the school. This meant that they had had little experience of the school under the previous headteacher, John Robinson. They therefore did not fully appreciate the way David Thomas was trying to change the school's culture and management style. They tended to be critical. For this group, the aims were seen as different from the priorities of the head. The senior staff were perceived to be more concerned

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about selling the school, maintaining the roll, and projecting a good public image of the school as a caring environment.

The other group, whom I shall refer to as the Established Assistant Staff, was drawn from more experienced and long serving assistant staff, often with a promoted post below the middle management tier. They tended to be more sympathetic to the head and the school's aims. The differences between these two groups, which appeared relatively minor initially, became much more sharply defined with the onset of industrial action.

Aims and objectives did not appear to have been mentioned in year or faculty meetings between the first and second series of interviews, except for some initial discussion about pastoral aims at the Pastoral Board.

The staff's view of the purpose of education

When asked what they thought was the chief purpose of education, staff said on both occasions that they thought it was to produce a well-rounded individual. They thought academic success was important as it represented the culmination of five years in the school, but it was not the only criterion of success. Staff suggested that education for life was important. Education should prepare people to live in society with appropriate personal and social skills. There was concern expressed that the advent of GCSE would lead to even greater emphasis on academic success at the expense of other aspects of school life. Some children would find a more academic diet difficult.

In 1983 the staff described the purpose of education in broadly similar terms. Typical of the responses was the view that:

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it is important to prepare young people for the outside world, not just in terms of academic attainment, but also to teach the skills they would need so that they could cope with life when they left school.

Asked how educational issues were raised for discussion, the staff said there was little formal discussion. One faculty head said:

there are informal discussions in the staff room, and a more formal level of discussion at faculty meetings, and at the Academic Board.

The same view was reflected by another faculty head, who thought:

people tend to be a little more honest informally.

Most assistant staff said that reviewing aims and objectives was fairly low down on both their and the school's list of priorities. What discussion took place was very informal and limited.

They suggested that:

Some attempts were made in staff meetings, but on the whole they tend to deal with fairly specific matters.

One Established Assistant teacher said:

the discussions tend to go round and round in circles.

By the end of the research, the action meant that there was little opportunity for discussion, with middle managers recording that they did not have any formal discussions because of the industrial dispute.

Despite the comments about the development of the whole person, and the importance of social education, there was a general feeling that the school regarded exam results as its first priority. One colleague said:

Hillside tends to stress the importance of exams. It's made very important by the publishing of the list of exam results (to staff). It is also trying to produce well adjusted and well mannered young people. I think the head sees success in terms of exam results.

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This view of the school's aims did not appear to have changed by the second round of interviews, in 1985/6. The staff thought that the school still had very much an exam bias.

One member of staff said:

Exam results are one of the primary objectives.

Staff thought that the school also tried to meet social aims, though not in a conscious way.

One Established Assistant teacher said:

it's not something that you consciously plan, like lessons.

One member of the senior team summed up the feelings of the staff when he described the purpose of education, saying:

Children need to feel that they have achieved something. They need to experience satisfaction and self esteem. They should feel that they have achieved success.

Attitudes to Aims and Objectives.

Discussion of aims and objectives can provide a way of focusing the school and establishing a common vision and sense of purpose. HMI (1977; 1985), Lyons et al. (1983) and Bolam et al (1993) all emphasise the importance of a shared vision as a way of developing staff unity and a team approach. The writing of the aims and objectives at Hillside did not achieve this sense of unity. Partly this was because the exercise was seen as an LEA-inspired directive, partly because time was short, with many other demands on staff time. The upshot was that the staff as a whole did not devote time to writing the school's aims. They tended to be written by the senior management and faculty heads, with some input from staff in some faculties, but there was no overall sense of ownership. One of the Junior Assistant Staff, asked about the purpose of education, put it succinctly:

It's almost a taboo subject. It's not done to talk about it.

In his view this was a serious shortcoming, as it went beyond aims and objectives and he interpreted this saying:

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I don't think anything fundamental is discussed. Some issues are so entrenched, like uniform, that to go against them is almost impossible.

Staff at all levels did not think the three stated aims of the school carried equal weight, and were convinced that examination success dominated the school's work, and was the head's priority. There was, therefore a sharp difference in the perception of the school's view of aims and objectives, and the staff's own views. The questionnaire responses identified social aims as significantly more important than academic success, though recognising that exam results were important. This view was repeated in the interviews, with staff at all levels saying:

It's important to teach the skills they will need to cope with the world. Not just in terms of academic attainment, but also so that they can have cope with life when they have left school.

To the Junior Assistant Staff, there was also a sharp difference between the stated aims of the school and the perceived priorities of the senior staff. One commented:

The aims are different from the priorities of the senior staff who see selling the school and maintaining the roll, projecting an image of the school as a well rounded, caring environment as their chief aim.

In summary

This chapter has examined the published aims and objectives of the school and compared them with the staff's views, expressed both in questionnaires and interviews. The staff's view of aims and objectives seemed to reflect the extent to which they were involved in their development. Lack of a sense of ownership affected the attitudes of the assistant staff to the school's general policy, emphasising the divisions in the school, rather than the whole team approach to management that the head was keen to develop.

The assistant staff did not regard the school's three stated aims as equal. They thought the academic aim dominated the school at the expense of other aims. The fact that faculty heads

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were paid on a higher salary scale than heads of year confirmed their view, which was echoed by the comments of heads of year elsewhere in the research (Chapter 12, p197). Senior staff and faculty heads did not agree that academic aims dominated the school; they spoke of the need for the education of the full person.

Certainly the school did attach great importance to the quality of exam results: a school that neglected them would have difficulty in recruiting students and reassuring parents. It was true that Personal and Social Education (PSE) lessons did not appear on the timetable at that time, and that heads of year were paid lower allowances than heads of faculty. One casualty of the industrial action that dominated this research was that heads of year withdrew from much of their contact with students during lesson breaks. Out of school activities ground to a halt because of the embargo on extracurricular work. There seemed to be a differential perception about the aims of the school that reflected the degree of stratification that recurs as a theme in this research.

Aims and objectives are an important part of the establishment of a shared culture in any school. The stratified response at Hillside reflected a need for a greater sharing of philosophy across the whole of the staff. Mention is made elsewhere in this research of the need for improved communications within the staff, and particularly between the senior and assistant staff (Chapter 11, p171).

The effect of this lack of a unified vision of the purpose of the school surfaced as a source of dissatisfaction and misunderstanding, especially when the industrial action commenced. It manifested itself amongst assistant members of staff as a hostility to the senior management,

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and a strong sense of the Junior Assistant Staff forming an Out-Group isolated from the policy-making process.

CHAPTER 8

THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Introduction

This chapter examines the role of the senior team at Hillside. It describes their role under John Robinson, the previous head, and the difficulties David Thomas faced in building his own team. The problems the team faced and the effect this had on the morale of the staff are examined. The senior staff's views about the changes, and the staff's responses, are also explored. This chapter relies on questionnaire and interview data. References to my field notebooks are shown in brackets e.g. (Book 1: p27).

Much of the literature about management in general and school management in particular deals with the development of management teams. Belbin (1981) has written about the different personalities and the way in which different combinations can bring success to the group. Sayles (1964) describes the importance of building and maintaining a team management style. Everard (1986), proposes that effective management requires working with other people. Adair (1973) suggests that two of the three tasks of management are to maintain the team and to meet the needs of team members. Edwin P. Smith (1973) suggests that the group need to work together well, with each individual playing his maximum part if they are to get a satisfactory result. Handy (1980) echoes this when he writes of the need to develop team spirit in a group, and suggests that failure often leads to group members turning the group into a social or casual group, and rejecting the task goals as unrealistic. Nias, Southworth and Yeomans (1989) write of the importance of creating a culture of collaboration. Herzberg (1966) suggests that a mutual reinforcing group identity is the key to group success.

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Richardson (1973) discusses the importance of sentience within working groups, and describes the satisfaction that comes from:

working with people for whom one has liking and respect...from the shared commitment to a task that all members feel to be important. (p23)

Ten Good Schools (1977) describes how good schools:

...have made power-sharing the keynote of their organisation and administration. (p35)

Bolam et al. (1993) found that in effectively managed schools:

The senior management team work together as a team; have roles and responsibilities which are clear to staff and are highly visible and approachable, and convey to staff the sense that the school is being actively steered and is under control, thereby providing reassurance; provide good and consistent support to the staff. (p4)

The senior team clearly have a major role in the development and communication of the school's policy. They are the link between the staff and the head, between policy-making and its execution. It is through the day to day actions of the senior team that the vision of the school, its aims and objectives, are turned into practice, and the whole school ethos is developed amongst assistant teachers. They are, therefore, key players in the development and maintenance of staff morale.

John Robinson

One of the features of John Robinson's 'club culture' leadership was the creation of a strong executive team. This inner cabinet was perceived to make most decisions that were then presented to heads of departments and staff meetings for ratification rather than further detailed discussion. The team met daily in the head's office. This meant channels of communication were perceived to be opened easily and policy decisions reached fairly quickly. One perceived drawback of this was that only a limited number of staff took part in the decision-making process and they tended to be dominated by the head. The close working relationships of the team appeared to provide a good training ground for promotion.

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David Thomas

When David Thomas arrived at Hillside in 1980, there was no established senior team. Both deputies and one of the senior teachers had left before he took up his appointment. The senior teacher (Bursar) and two senior teachers promoted internally by the previous administration remained. One of his first tasks was the appointment of a new deputy head.

The senior team that David Thomas inherited was largely the result of internal promotion. Their attitudes to their role had been shaped by the previous head. They were accustomed to working in a club culture, where the lines of communication are short and the core team is the key unit. He wanted to change their role. He was concerned that members of the team should operate more effectively and improve their staff management skills, so that they were better able to manage strong and forceful middle managers.

David Thomas was keen to change the staff's view of the senior team, and establish a different culture. He felt that the previous administration had had too much central control, and wanted to develop a person culture (Handy 1984) with a greater sense of democracy, and participation at the middle management level. He was concerned about the problems of introducing a substantial change in the management style without causing confusion in the staff (Book 1: p16).

Senior staff were expected to carry a greater teaching load and spend less time in meetings in the head's office. He was concerned to broaden their point of view, and develop a greater sense of team responsibility. He wanted the senior team to support each other and the staff in a more active and positive way, whether a problem was part of their "official" responsibility or not. He felt that the staff would have greater confidence in a senior team that was willing to tackle any problem in any area when it arose.

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To the senior staff, this was a radical change. The club culture of John Robinson had demonstrated their status in the institution, and the right to exercise power based on their position. Now they were expected to change their style for something that was much less clearly defined. The support mechanism of regular meetings that had reinforced the roles of the senior team was not continued. David Thomas made clear that he expected them to use their own initiative and take responsibility for their delegated areas, rather than to bring things back to him for decision. Ball (1987) describes the effect of such change on staff when he says:

Change involves disruption to the established pattern of advantage and preferment...some members of the organisation will see their interests threatened. (p146/7)

At the beginning of the research, in 1982, the head took personal responsibility for the curriculum and wrote the timetable. This meant that senior staff often found they had to defer to him before they could take decisions that had a curriculum dimension (Book 1: p78). With the establishment of the second senior team in the autumn of 1984, curriculum management and timetabling became a shared responsibility.

The Senior Staff view: 1983

The senior staff commented on the change in style. One said:

it isn't like the previous head who always had the senior staff around him.

However, he also commented:

I think that the majority of staff thought that was a good thing, as to have a lot of senior staff in one room all day long was not popular.

The increased teaching commitment of the senior staff meant that there was little time for meetings. As daily meetings had been a regular feature of John Robinson's headship the change in the meetings pattern caused concern. One member of the team said:

I think the machinery is in place: we have a senior staff meeting scheduled for Friday mornings, to consult on policy, etc. Almost invariably the head has booked an alternative meeting and cancels it.

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Another colleague said:

There is only one period in the week when all the senior staff are free, and so there is no opportunity for forward planning. You carry on from day to day but there are times when you needed to talk things out in detail. The head is flexible enough to listen to what is put forward.

One consequence of the pressure on meetings was that consultation was not perceived to work well or consistently. The team had been used to developing policy centrally, and then disseminating the decision through sectional meetings. The change of style meant that sometimes:

the machinery of consultation is hit and miss. Quite often things happen because they have evolved and its happened by default rather than by positive decision. The head doesn't necessarily consult and draw people in for discussion. Sometimes he will consult with everyone, at other times he will make a unilateral decision.

This was reflected by another colleague who commented:

The head tends to have an ad hoc approach.

The senior staff were also very concerned about the public consequences of a lack of team meetings. They had been used to close involvement in decision-making, and had had a role in disseminating and defending decisions. The change in culture made them feel that it was:

very difficult when someone hits you with a question when you are absolutely cold. We have had one of the last six meetings.

They thought this lack of knowledge was interpreted by the staff as a sign that the senior team were in disarray. They identified the problem as an unwillingness on David Thomas' part to have management discussion. Ball (1987) suggests that heads use power to prevent the emergence of any potentially subversive opposition by their exclusion from decision-making. By avoiding senior management meetings, David Thomas may have been simply trying to avoid creating a further opportunity for conflict within the senior team in circumstances that would allow the latent opposition to find its voice.

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On occasions the lack of coherence in the senior team emerged in public. One problem that arose, over detention, showed the two senior pastoral staff disagreeing with the head in a meeting. One member of the senior staff said:

The problem arose because the head had not discussed the matter in detail with the senior staff. He tried to get an agreement without sounding out his senior staff first. He didn't talk it over. It was a fundamental change in practice, and it wasn't really discussed.

They saw this as an example of the lack of unity of the senior staff, and felt the effect on the staff at the meeting was unfortunate, showing that:

The head is not in full contact with his executive team.

The difficulties in the senior team were a source of frustration to one senior member of staff, who wanted to prepare himself for promotion. He felt he was not given opportunities to develop his own skills because little real responsibility was delegated to him by the head.

There was, therefore, a key difference in opinion between the Head and his senior team over the function of senior management. On occasion, the differences led to personal disagreements. The change in style affected the morale of the senior staff. Their view of leadership presupposed a strong central figure operating a closely knit club culture. The loosely coupled personal culture being developed by David Thomas conflicted with their experience and expectations. Their perception was that their power and status within the school had been reduced, which they found frustrating. One member of the team commented that:

I take flak for supporting the head's decisions, and it's infuriating when I have no control over the decisions. I'm not as happy as I was three years ago: that was a privileged time. The atmosphere was improving after the change of heads, and I was very happy. The tight discipline of the old head was still there, but the consultation that the new head had promised was beginning, so we had the best of both worlds.

This member of the senior team felt that changes in management style had not been entirely successful. He was concerned that the lack of a strong figure at the centre meant that

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disciplinary issues were not pursued with the students and the school was going slightly downhill. This view was not shared by other members of the team who perceived the change in the disciplinary process as a major step forward, saying that the school was:

Much happier. Children and staff are more relaxed...there isn't the aggressive attitude to staff that there was.

The morale of the first senior team is shown in the following diagram:

High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William's model The First Senior Team 1980-1984					
	Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
First Senior Team	Low: do not feel previous success recognised or valued.	Low: group do not meet regularly.	Low: group have not identified their relationship or task skills; poor at vision.	Low: have little experience of success to build on.	Low for members of initial SMT.

Changing the Senior Team: Autumn 1984

In September 1984 the head was able to reorganise the senior team, following the promotion of the senior teacher (pastoral) to deputy headship. He was able to replace this member of staff by an internal appointment, and make a second internal appointment to the post of senior teacher (academic affairs). Both internal appointments were existing faculty heads. The three senior teacher positions were filled for an academic year, but the senior teacher (Bursar) retired in the summer of 1985, and he was not replaced by another senior member of staff.

The changes in the senior management team coincided with the onset of industrial action. The first period of action began in April 1984 and continued until July. The re-organised senior team came together in September 1984, and in December that year industrial action re-started, and was to last until January 1986. This meant that the new senior team had very little time to develop a sense of unity and common purpose before the second wave of action. They had not had the experience of working together in more “normal” times that give teams confidence in

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each other and a history of success in achieving their aims together. In Williams (1984) terms, they had not the experience of success in four of the five areas that contribute to high morale. They had not developed Group Cohesion, as the group was newly formed. They did not have the experience of success in working together to meet team goals that is a key part of Adventurous Striving. Their Tenacity and Fortitude was not soundly based on an experience of mutual support. They needed to develop a new and different relationship as a team if they were to develop Leadership Synergy, so vital in inspiring confidence and conveying the vision of the school.

At the same time these changes occurred one head of year left and another agreed to leave his post and take up a different responsibility within the school. These changes meant that the balance of power in the school had moved significantly from the pastoral to the academic side of the school as the new year heads, with one exception, were all relatively junior and inexperienced staff.

The changes in the membership of the senior management team led to some initial uncertainties about roles. One said:

We've never had a job description. I don't really know what I am supposed to be doing.

Another suggested:

This shuffle has turned a lot of the senior management jobs on their heads, so in some areas it isn't clear how far responsibilities go. There's a bit of in-fighting at the moment as to who does what job. It isn't very clear.

This view was reflected by another member of the senior management team who said:

None of the management jobs have been thought out. We haven't sat down and thrashed out what everybody does. There's been a lot of in-fighting.

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The problems of finding time to meet regularly continued to be a difficulty for the new senior team. One member said:

The senior staff haven't met this term. Meetings have been scheduled but they just don't take place. Discussion is a bit erratic.

Another member of the senior team said:

Senior management discuss the general direction of the school at senior staff meetings, though they are often cancelled. We are supposed to have one a week.

When meetings did take place they were seen as of great value, involving the team in decisions about the management of the school, helping develop Tenacity and Fortitude and Group Cohesion:

We are supposed to meet every week but things get in the way so the meetings sometimes don't happen at all. When they do they are of use and strength.

One benefit of frequent meetings was seen as the development of Leadership Synergy and Adventurous Striving:

The more you have the senior team together, the greater there's going to be the sharing of information and joint decision-making, and that sort of thing doesn't just happen.

When regular meetings were not taking place, the senior staff were concerned that:

policy suddenly emerges rather than is discussed. Quite arbitrary things happen.

One instance of this was the issuing of the Pink Paper, a discussion document produced by the head during the teachers' action, to try to gather staff views about changes to the school day.

(A copy of the paper is in Appendix 4). One member of the senior team said that:

the pink paper was issued bang, straight out to people from the head. The senior staff did not discuss it until today. Some of the senior staff knew nothing about it. It went out by mistake; the head hadn't meant it to happen that way.

The senior staff identified the solution to the problem:

We need a good management structure with real delegation, with you carrying the can for what you do. I don't mean to land it all on the head. It doesn't work as shared

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management, and that’s what it ought to be. We all have to take our share of the responsibility. It’s a team responsibility, and the team has problems.

Another member said:

We rarely have a meeting and say “Look, this is your responsibility. Can you get on and do it?”

The onset of industrial action also led to a change in the head's approach. One of the senior staff said:

when the head first arrived, he said we should make joint decisions at meetings. Recently he has said, “I’m making this decision” and it has been unpopular. I think we ought to go out of our way as a senior staff group to explain to the staff why we have made decisions; to explain what is happening and why.

Despite all these difficulties, the new senior team had a rather different level of morale. By the end of the research in 1986 their personal satisfaction was clearly rising, as can be seen from the following diagram.

High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William’s model					
The Second Senior Team 1984 onwards					
	Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
Second Senior Team	Developing: do not meet so do not experience group sense of achievement: this began to change towards the end of the research.	Developing: group do not meet regularly: this began to change towards the end of the research.	Developing: initially: group have not identified their relationship or task skills; poor at vision: this began to change towards the end of the research.	Developing: initially; little experience of success to build on; this began to change towards the end of the research.	High: for recently appointed members of second SMT.

The senior team and staff morale

The two senior teams did not appear to exert a coherent influence on the school. The perception that the senior staff did not operate as a team partly contributed to this impression. Once the action began, the situation was made worse by the lack of meetings, where other staff would see the senior team as a group. Their influence tended to be diffused throughout

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the school. Individual members of staff were aware of the contribution of senior staff whose responsibilities touched them directly, and whom they met regularly on an informal basis. There was no overall perception of a senior staff responsibility, or presence in the school, or of the senior staff as a team.

Both senior teams' perception was that the head sought genuine consultation on some issues and was open to persuasion, but had firmly held views about others and was unlikely to compromise. There was agreement that the head was generally approachable on a personal level, and staff were able to see him and raise issues with him.

The lack of regular meetings had an unfortunate effect, creating the impression that the senior staff did not know what was happening in the school. It was felt that this led to poor communications and a staff view of the senior team as disunited. This had its greatest effect on long term planning, and sometimes led to important decisions being taken at short notice.

The senior team were aware that their lack of unity had an effect on the staff's morale and undermined confidence in the senior management team.

Accessibility

Staff identified accessibility to the head as a key issue. It emerges throughout the research as a barometer of staff involvement and morale. When asked about access to the head, there was little difference in perception between the two rounds of interviews.

All senior staff said that they had reasonably easy access on a personal level. One of the senior staff spoke of the difficulty he had faced on one occasion when he wished to speak to the

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head and other events had prevented the discussion taking place at the agreed time. Formal consultation through senior staff meetings was fragmentary.

There was a mixed response to how available the head was to assistant staff. There was a feeling that accessibility depended to some extent on the chances of the timetable, with some staff only free at times when the head was always busy. Other staff had free time that coincided with times that the head was available. This meant that the head was not equally available to all staff, and there was general agreement that an appointments system with the head would improve accessibility. However, more than one member of the staff made the point that the head was accessible if staff were prepared to come in before school started or see him after school had finished, i.e. outside the working day. If approached at these times he rarely turned people away, but would make time to listen to them.

The senior staff said that they thought the head's accessibility to staff was important, and that staff wanted the personal approval of the head. One said:

The head's accessibility to the staff affects morale. They can come and see me, but it's second best.

Another said:

There's nothing like a pat on the back. It makes the wheels turn easier. I try to do it but it's not like the approval of the top man; there's nothing like the top man coming round.

In this respect, the staff reflected Williams' view (1984) that:

the leader occupies a central position from where he influences morale directly and through his effect on the group and the individuals (p6).

The absence of any system of regular meetings of the Head with staff on a small group or one to one basis mattered. A system of appraisal or staff development interviews might have had positive effects.

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By the second set of interviews there was very little opportunity for staff involvement in the decision-making process. The initiatives that the senior management tried to introduce fell foul of the embargo on meetings. Even an attempt to arrange some consultation in school time failed because of union attitudes. The response to this situation was the Pink Paper described elsewhere, which was an attempt to consult staff about the next year's timetable, and which produced a very mixed response. There was a strong feeling that all staff should be able to express a point of view. One member of the senior staff said:

The school is not just a hierarchy; the most junior teacher is a manager in terms of day to day decisions he has to take about his work in the classroom. What goes on in the whole school is important to him, as he has to put the policy into action. If he does not believe in its policies, his position is untenable.

Another suggested:

There ought to be an opportunity for every member of staff to express an opinion. If people do not have an opportunity to influence policy they become very frustrated.

This closely reflected the views of the assistant staff (Chapter 11, p166). The senior staff defined their role as:

to give people opportunities to influence school policy, but guide it so that it does not lead to bad policy decision: a case of being able to temper exuberance with experience.

There was some concern expressed about the extent to which faculty heads had time to gather views and consult staff. Where this aspect of middle management work was neglected, there was likely to be difficulty. The point was made more than once that the way in which middle managers tried to influence the head affected the likelihood of success. When middle management raised issues in a constructive and positive way, the head was willing to listen.

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In Summary

There were two senior teams during the course of this research. Both faced similar difficulties. There were occasions when one member of the senior team was ignorant of proposals or tentative decisions taken by other members of the senior team at meetings. In one or two instances the proposals leaked out to staff at other levels in the school hierarchy. One member of the senior team found himself in the position of being asked a question by a more junior member of staff seeking clarification of a proposal, when he himself did not know what the proposals were.

The lack of cohesion and mutual knowledge within the senior staff was interpreted by the rest of the staff as an indication that some parts of the senior management were in disarray. One member of staff commented, when interviewed, that the trouble with referring problems to the senior staff was that you would almost certainly get two different answers if you asked two different people.

Perhaps a part of the difficulty with the senior team lay in the extent to which its members were the result of internal promotions. Of the six staff (excepting the head) who filled senior roles in the course of this research, only one had been appointed from outside. The others had to adapt to a new role in the school where they were already established in a different position.

The head's management and development of his senior team is open to speculation. The lack of regular meetings could be interpreted as a management strategy to limit the power of the group by denying them opportunities to meet as a team, instead concentrating on developing individual relationships with senior team members. This would be an effective mechanism for

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defusing and preventing open conflict that might result from his change in school culture and leadership style.

A team building strategy would have helped the new members of the second senior team adapt to their new role, and gain confidence in their new professional relationships. The head was faced with the difficulty of developing a new senior team in the troubled period between September 1984 and December 1984, when industrial action re-commenced. During that very short period there was not time for a team management strategy to be fully developed. By 1986, when the industrial action was drawing to a close, there was some evidence of increasing senior team cohesion.

Once the industrial action started, in December 1984, the lack of group cohesion and success put strains on the new senior team. These strains would not have applied in the same way to a team more experienced and confident in working together, and more secure in their group leadership abilities.

Lyons, Stenning & McQueeney (1983) point out that Heads who handled the industrial action well:

had taken care to lay the necessary foundations before the advent of the dispute. Invariably they had strong and effective senior management teams who enjoyed the respect of staff, and the Headteachers had gone to considerable lengths to establish good personal relationships with assistant teachers.
(p33)

David Thomas had been unable to develop these positive relationships, and when the industrial action began, his senior management team found themselves exposed.

CHAPTER 9

MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

Introduction

This chapter examines the operation of meetings as part of the school policy-making process. It identifies the problems the head faced in developing a more democratic style of participatory management. The chapter looks at the structures that "officially" existed for making policy, and compares them with the observed reality. It considers the way policy-making changed as the school developed, and the head's view of the process. The chapter relies on the observation of meetings and interviews with the headteacher. The reactions of staff to the changes described in this chapter are examined in Chapter 10.

Ball (1987) says that policy-making is managed by heads in a micro-political way. He also argues that it can be an arena of conflict between different power groups seeking to enhance their influence or protect their vested interests. Policy-making is a key area for the development of management style. Lyons et.al. (1983) and Bolam et.al. (1993) both write of the need to involve staff in the policy-making process if a school is to develop Group Cohesion, and experience a sense of Adventurous Striving towards its goals. They identify the importance of the process for conveying the vision as part of Leadership Synergy. Policy-making is a key activity for the head, and the extent to which the head allows others to influence the process affects the micro-political climate in the school.

Middle Management Meetings: The original structure

The school's aims and objectives were turned into management structures by the creation of a series of consultative procedures. The formal structure ceased to operate twice during the research because of the withdrawal of goodwill by the teaching staff, following the advice of

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their professional associations. The structure was operational during the first two and a half years of the research, and I kept a detailed record of the meetings that I attended as observer. The effect that the withdrawal of goodwill had on the decision-making process is discussed on more detail in Chapter 14.

In 1982, the school's consultation process worked through the pattern of meetings below:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">* a monthly staff meeting on the first Monday of the month;* a middle management meeting every other Monday. |
|---|

The head had a clearly defined view of the role of middle managers, both as administrators and policy-makers. His views were expressed explicitly during the research, and can also be inferred from the way he allowed middle managers to operate. He delegated authority to others and trusted them to carry out their responsibilities, reflecting Handy's description of a person culture. There are strong similarities with Ball's (1987) description of the interpersonal head. The head's clearest public statements of his views were made at middle management meetings.

At the middle management meeting on 1 July 1982, the head explained how he thought middle management meetings should operate. He regarded them as an important forum, with the middle management staff fully involved in the decision-making process. He thought they had a responsibility to explain to other staff what decisions had been taken, how the decision had been taken and why. He regarded middle management staff as having a pivotal role in the dissemination of information, a key idea he returned to on a number of occasions. The discussion then moved on to the degree of autonomy that individual faculty heads and year heads enjoyed. The head indicated that, although he reserved the right to veto a decision he thought was counter to the school's general policy, he delegated authority to staff so that they could use it.

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On 1 July 1982, the head explained his view, saying:

There can be no delegation without trust.

(Book 1: p11)

The discussion raised other issues about the decision-making process. It was agreed that in future meetings should have agendas published in advance, and be minuted. The minutes should be disseminated to all the staff.

There was an element of ambiguity about the function of the meetings. At this time, the head brought most of the policy decisions he was considering to the meetings for discussion. It was not always clear whether the function of the meeting was to discuss and advise, or make recommendations to a full staff meeting, or to take a decision. The head's general philosophy suggested that he did not wish to turn a proposal into a policy without at least giving the full staff the opportunity to comment upon it in a staff meeting. In reality a proposal that went to the full staff meeting after being agreed at the middle management level was unlikely to be rejected. The head did not reserve the right to bring ideas to meetings at any level. The agendas for all meetings were open, and time was frequently spent discussing important ideas raised by other staff, such as the school's policy on special needs, language across the curriculum, options, and reporting.

In an interview on 2 July 1982, I made a point of asking the head if I was correct in my understanding of his view of the decision-making process. He said he wanted to manage the school by consensus. Delegation was not simply a form of words, but represented a genuine delegation of power within a prescribed parameter. He felt he had been rather authoritarian in laying down his views at the previous night's meeting. He wanted to bring about a change in the school's management style without causing confusion in staff. He felt that the meeting had cleared the procedural channels.

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The head placed strong emphasis on the point that making decisions was part of the responsibility of all middle management staff. They were also responsible for disseminating information and acting as communication channels with the assistant staff. He described his role as leading by example, but he had reservations about the extent to which this was succeeding.

There appeared to be a difference between the way the head viewed his role and the staff's perception of the head's role. The staff, in the head's eyes, appeared to want to be directed into courses of action rather than take part in the process of deciding the best course of action for the school. In part, the head was looking for a dual role from middle management staff. On the one hand they had to be prepared to defend their interests. On the other they had to be prepared to take a wider view, and put their individual responsibilities at the back of their minds. The opportunity to take part in meetings on the development of school policy was seen by the head as an opportunity for staff in the middle management tier to gain some experience of the managerial role. In that way the meetings could be said to have a contribution to make to staff development. He was concerned about the perceptions different people had of the decision-making process that meant they went away with different understandings about what had been decided. He also felt that the senior staff avoided the staffroom. He felt he spent too much time on urgent but unimportant business and very little on important business.

The meetings in the autumn of 1982 were characterised by an increasing impatience by David Thomas. I now focus on three management decisions that were taken at middle management meetings. The decisions involved the development of a school tuck shop; a change in exam policy and a review of the management of pupil behaviour.

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The Tuck Shop

In early decisions, as in the decision to develop a school tuck shop, (4 September 1982), the head's view predominated.

The head invited the meeting to suggest ways in which the income from the sponsored walk to be held in October could be used. There was a discussion of possible schemes with several staff expressing the view that whatever was decided they appreciated being asked. The head summarised the feeling of the meeting as supporting one major project, rather than the proceeds being dissipated through a series of small projects, with no visible benefit to the school. Schemes proposed:

- * Minibus. There was some discussion on whether the minibus was a drain on the school's resources.
- * A school tuck shop which could finance the minibus.

After further discussion, the establishment of a school tuck shop emerged as the favourite scheme.

(Although the discussion ranged widely, the head regularly brought the discussion back to the tuck shop idea, and without overtly saying that it was his choice, he seemed to ensure that it was chosen.)

The discussion went round the various options again. At 5.30 (the meeting began at 3.40) the head decided that the consensus of the meeting was for the money to be spent on a tuck shop and the school library (Book 1: p23).

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Exam Policy

Sometimes, the head's view did not predominate, and middle managers were given the right to amend the previous policy. One example was the proposal to make changes to the school's policy on examinations and the sixth form at the meeting on 23 September 1982. In this instance, the desire for change had come from the faculty heads, though the head did not oppose them.

There was a discussion about the success rates at CSE and GCE. The school's policy had been for most pupils to take CSE in the fifth year and GCE in the sixth. Some faculty heads wanted to review this policy. There was concern that the success rate in the 6th form was disappointing, and the drop-out rate high. When it was suggested that the discussion was critical of staff, the head replied:

We cannot escape our responsibility for evaluating our own performance.

The head explained that the governors were happy to support a policy of dual entry in the fifth year where the staff thought this appropriate. The meeting agreed that dual entry was at the discretion of the faculty heads.

Behaviour

In a staff meeting on September 30, taken by the deputy in the head's absence, the role of year heads as managers of discipline was discussed in a meeting that became increasingly hostile. Staff expressed concern over the Open School policy, which allowed students free use of the building at lunchtimes when there was little supervision. Other issues were raised regularly, like bags (students were not meant to carry large bags) and uniform (students should wear ties, but not ear-rings or make-up). The meeting focused on who was responsible for the maintenance of policies regulating student behaviour. The deputy repeated several times that the school's

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policy on all these issues had been agreed at middle management meetings, and had not been changed. He suggested that it was the responsibility of heads of year to implement the policy. He did not regard a staff meeting as an appropriate opportunity to change it. He would be willing to have the issue debated properly in another forum. Two heads of year suggested that little was being done to support them in the maintenance of discipline. The deputy strenuously denied this, and described problems that the school had been facing over violence between Hillside pupils and outsiders. My notes say that the general tone of the meeting can only be described as hostile (Book 1: p39).

I telephoned the deputy concerned several days later. He felt that part of the problem had arisen because staff were looking back to the black and white certainties of the previous head's management style (Book 1: p48).

At the middle management meeting on October 7 the head made clear his view that responsibility for behaviour and the enforcement of policies related to it lay with middle management. There was some discussion about standards of dress and behaviour, with heads of year asking for action by senior staff to enforce the policy laid down in the school handbook. The head repeated that the responsibility for the school's behaviour policy did not rest on the senior team alone. It was a corporate responsibility agreed by middle managers, including year heads and:

it is incumbent on all of us to make sure the system works. Every one should pitch in on this issue. I would not accept it was one person's duty to accept responsibility for this.

He repeated several times during the meeting that policy was agreed by middle managers and should be implemented by them. It was not one member of staff, or the senior team who had

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the responsibility of enforcing the policies. The head recalled that a previous meeting had laid down the policy and the staff should enforce it.

After further discussion about who had the authority to insist on standards, the head suggested that the discussion implied that the roles of senior staff needed rethinking. He suggested that if the staff wanted the senior staff to take a more active role in managing these issues, it would mean they did less teaching. He was glad to have cleared his opinions through the staff. The meeting then moved on to other issues.

After the meeting I asked the head if he had meant to take such a major step in restructuring the school's management. He said he regretted that staff would not be led by example and that therefore he had to restructure his management team in the light of the staff's willingness to be led. He wanted to find different ways to solve the school's problems, using different methods than the previous head. He thought that rotating senior staff's responsibilities so that they could develop their experience and expertise might be one way to help to manage change (Book 1: p51-58).

I noted after the meeting that the head had taken a much more active leadership role. The tone of the meeting had been stronger and he had picked up one or two staff over comments they had made. He had also led the discussion and was prepared to correct staff when their remarks were unhelpful. Staff were told rather than asked and staff short-comings were publicly mentioned in general terms I think for the first time.

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The re-organisation of meetings

In this section, I examine the pressures that led to a decision to change the structure of management meetings.

At the end of the middle management meeting on October 28, the head suggested that he needed to discuss possible curriculum changes arising from the Manpower Services Commission's (MSC) new Training and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) for the next academic year. He suggested setting up a curriculum group. One faculty head suggested that the curriculum group should be made up of faculty heads alone. The head did not appear enthusiastic about this proposal, ignoring it when it was first mentioned. He suggested that the nature and function of meetings should be discussed at a future meeting after half term. After further discussion it became clear that there were only two middle management meetings scheduled in the second half of the term, on November 25 and December 9. He went on to suggest that it might be possible for heads of year and faculty heads to meet separately in future.

A more experienced year head argued that year heads should be included in discussions about the curriculum. The head closed the meeting by proposing that faculty heads would meet on November 9 (in his absence). Year heads would meet on November 10, and there would be a joint middle management meeting on November 25. The final decisions about the curriculum would be taken at a middle management meeting on December 9. In fact the meeting planned for November 25 took place on November 18.

Again my notes record that the head took a more active leadership role, and was unwilling to let discussion meander fruitlessly. (Book 1: p69)

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I was unable to attend the meeting on November 9. One faculty head I interviewed described the meeting as very constructive. Faculty heads had abandoned a defensive sectional interest and instead considered the over-all issue of the curriculum and the way it met the children's needs. (Book 1: p75)

I subsequently discussed the meeting with two members of the senior team. They said it had been very valuable, dealing with real educational issues rather than defending sectional issues that tended to dominate middle management meetings. The meeting the following day, 10 November, with just heads of year present was also seen as very successful. Year heads had abandoned the regular discussion of day to day routine administrative matters and had also considered wider educational issues. (Book 1: p76)

I met the head the following day, 11 November, and discussed the extent to which the apparent structure of the school reflected the power bases in school, and the relative importance of year and faculty heads. We discussed the fact that pastoral work appeared to have primacy in the school at that time. The senior team roles were largely interpreted in pastoral terms, and year heads were more experienced than faculty heads. David Thomas did not accept that this meant pastoral work dominated the school, pointing to his own role as curriculum manager. (Book 1: p79)

The middle management meeting of November 18 (replacing the meeting scheduled for November 25) discussed the details of the proposed curriculum changes. It agreed that faculties should review their courses to ensure they were suitable for all abilities, especially less able students. At the end of that meeting, it was agreed that the issues should be discussed with the whole staff at the staff meeting on December 2. At that staff meeting the head explained

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the MSC's TVEI proposals, and their possible effect on the school's curriculum to the whole staff.

The meeting scheduled for December 9 became an open meeting, continuing discussion from the previous week, and so the discussion about the future shape of meetings did not take place as planned.

There were no further middle management meetings that term, and I was unable to attend meetings in the early part of the spring term because of personal ill health and severe weather. The discussion had continued after the Christmas holiday, and resulted in a decision being taken on 10 February to split the middle management meetings into academic and pastoral boards. (Book 1: p81)

The picture that emerges from this period of middle management meetings is of the head becoming increasingly impatient with the group as a whole, and its unwillingness to manage responsibility at the middle management level in the way he wished.

With hindsight, the decision to reorganise the school's middle management policy came about through a series of coincidences and conflicts that highlighted problems with the way the school's middle management operated. The actions of the two year heads at the staff meeting on September 30 led to the head taking a stronger line in meetings, and expressing anxiety about the way staff responded to his leadership. The intervention of a faculty head proposing separate faculty and year meetings did not appear to command his support initially, though in the event both meetings were regarded as very successful.

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The head's conversations with me on October 7 and November 17 suggested that he was reviewing the way the school's structure operated. It is not possible to tell where or how the final decision to change the meeting pattern was taken. Certainly faculty heads were strongly in favour, and some year heads concerned about being excluded from curriculum discussion. The head wished middle managers to take greater responsibility, and a wider view, and this had apparently been accomplished in the year and faculty head meetings. Whatever the reason, the decision was highly significant, and led to a change in the balance of power. The faculty heads had identified themselves as a group that wanted to be positively involved in curriculum development. Their involvement offered the head a support group amongst the middle managers that appeared to share his interest in the curriculum and his way of managing the school together. The actions of the heads of year in criticising the operation of senior management in the public forum of a staff meeting contrasted with the faculty heads support. They clearly alienated the senior staff by their actions, and in doing so appeared to damage their career prospects in the school. One reported a conversation with the head that implied his future promotion in the school would be opposed by the senior staff. (Book 1: p111)

The initial pattern of meetings gave heads of year and faculty heads equal status. The dominance of pastoral staff in the first senior management team effectively allowed the pastoral side of the school to dominate the meetings. Splitting the group placed the planning and development aspect of the school in the faculty heads' hands, with behaviour management left in the hands of year heads. In this way the power base of the meeting was transformed. Faculty heads became a part of the head's In-Group and their morale was improved. Heads of year, like their counterparts in the first senior team, felt that their influence was reduced, and with it their job satisfaction and morale, as they became part of an Out-Group. The effect of this change on the morale of year heads can be seen from the way staff meetings between March

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and December 1983. Following the restructuring in February 1983, staff meetings were dominated by internal disagreements and were generally hostile to the senior management. The opposition was led by the more senior heads of year.

A micro-political view of these events would suggest that faculty heads had effectively mounted a coup, extending their influence at the expense of the pastoral staff at senior and middle management levels. The senior heads of year appeared to be fighting a rearguard action, focused chiefly on skirmishes in staff meetings.

My interviews with the head suggest that he did not actively seek this radical change, and tried to maintain the involvement of year heads in making curriculum policy (Book 1: p69). However, they also record his concern about the way the senior staff interpreted their roles. The head felt that he did not have a solid basis of support amongst the senior staff, who were more familiar with a different management style. The change in meeting pattern gave him support and a power base as he tried to develop the school in the way he thought important. Whatever the private thinking, the effect of the decision was to start the process of transformation of the school's wider leadership. It changed from a group with predominantly pastoral experience and sympathies with the previous management style to a group that more accurately reflected David Thomas' own views. The second stage of the transformation, the restructuring of the senior team, has been described in Chapter 8.

Despite the change in policy, and the clearly stated view that discussion about policy should take place in the forum of middle management rather than staff meetings, the two heads of year who had spoken at the September staff meeting returned to the issue at the staff meeting on March 3. The head had reminded staff that they all needed to be vigilant over discipline, and

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thanked them for their efforts in improving behaviour. The matter then opened into a more general discussion of discipline problems and the Open School policy. One of the two year heads commented on a general decline in standards of behaviour in the school and asked for the policy to be interpreted more firmly. The other asked that students be supervised if they were allowed into school. The head replied that he did not wish to see students harassed by staff, and repeated his view that the management of discipline was a corporate responsibility. (Book 1: p109)

After the restructuring of middle management, there appeared to be a change in the way meetings were managed. Increasingly, meetings discussed issues brought forward by middle managers, rather than by the senior staff, and the practice of producing a briefing paper began to become established. The head was involved in the management of the consultation process. He did not initiate the change, though he appeared to be in sympathy with it, as it reflected his wish to have middle managers more involved in policy-making.

After the change in structure, the way of making decisions also changed. Heads of faculty or year would present a paper outlining their views on an issue and it would be debated by the group. If the idea was accepted it would either become policy, or a small working group would be formed to develop the idea and consult more fully. This happened with reports and options.

The revised management meetings

In this section, I review the operation of the revised management meetings, focusing on decisions made about reports and options.

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The new structure established a Pastoral Board chaired by the senior teacher responsible for pastoral care, and an Academic Board chaired initially by senior deputy, and subsequently the senior teacher responsible for academic affairs. The new pattern was:

- * a monthly staff meeting on the first Monday of the month
- * an academic board meeting on the second Monday;
- * a pastoral board meeting on the third Monday;
- * a Joint Consultative Council (JCC) made up of heads of years and heads of faculties.

The Academic Board was usually chaired by the first deputy head, who was head of Upper School. When the senior teacher responsible for academic affairs was appointed to that position, he took over the chairmanship of the committee. A period of industrial dispute was beginning, and so he had little opportunity to develop that role. The Pastoral Board was run by the senior teacher (Pastoral). Staff meetings and meetings of the JCC were usually chaired by the head. The atmosphere in the restructured meetings was very different from that in the middle management meetings. At least eighteen staff used to attend the middle management meeting, with a possible maximum of six faculty heads, six year heads, six senior staff and other staff co-opted from time to time. The larger meeting had become difficult to manage effectively. The smaller meetings, with usually ten or twelve present, were more informal and friendly. The JCC could meet on the last Monday but tended to meet only when there was some controversial issue that required the views of both bodies to be heard together.

Meetings of the new boards were held in the spring, summer and autumn terms of 1983 and the spring term of 1984. In the summer term of 1984 the industrial action meant that meetings were suspended, and did not resume until July 1984. Meetings continued during the autumn term of 1984, but by the spring of 1985 renewed action over the pay claim for that year brought meetings to a halt once again. By the end of the research period (April 1986) there had

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not been any agreement to restart them. Thus a major development of the school's consultation procedures was dogged by industrial disputes. The new bodies were not really able to come to terms with and develop their new roles as fully as possible. The head found himself unable to implement the changes he and his colleagues wished to see. This had an adverse effect on the head's ability to develop a participatory management structure.

The role of the revised committees was raised by a head of faculty at the Academic Board meeting on 12 May 1983. The head made clear that he wanted staff at different levels to be involved in the formulation of policy. One conclusion of the meeting was that future meetings should be minuted and the minutes published in the staff room, so that all staff could at least be aware of what was being proposed.

Reports

At the JCC meeting on 24 February 1983 a document proposing a new way of reporting to parents was presented by a head of year for consideration (Book 1: p104).

At the staff meeting the following week, 3 March 1983, the head said that a review of reporting procedures was under way. He distributed a document showing the proposals and summarised them. He asked staff who had a view to represent their opinions to the faculty heads before the following Thursday, as a decision would have to be taken soon. A member of staff asked if the changes would be phased in or happen all at once. The head said no decision had been taken yet. The member of staff asked if more time would be available for the completion of reports. The head suggested that two assistant members of staff join the committee to discuss this (Book 1: p110).

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It was agreed that there should be an "Open" Pastoral Board meeting to discuss reports on the 17 March 1983. The head opened the meeting and explained the background. He asked different staff to explain the proposals they favoured. He then asked for the views of staff who were not represented at middle management meetings. There was a discussion about different styles of reporting. At the end of the meeting the head asked for a decision. It was agreed that a new format for reports, using a single sheet rather than a book, be adopted. The head suggested that alternative formats for the single sheet should be developed. The head confirmed that a decision in principle to adopt a single sheet reporting system had been made at that meeting. Suggestions about format should reach the deputy by the end of the following week. The new report forms were adopted later that year (Book 2: p1).

Options

The new policy for the management of pupil options was another policy change largely determined through middle management meetings, though with the head's support.

At the same JCC meeting on 24 February 1983, the head said he thought the form tutor often had a better view of a child's overall progress than individual subject teachers, whose view was inevitably only partial. He thought there was more to being a form tutor than simply marking a register and giving out papers. He would like to see form tutors much more actively involved (Book 1: p100).

This view was repeated at the Academic Board meeting on 15 September 1983, when the deputy head said he was keen that form tutors be involved in the options procedure (Book 2: p16).

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At the next Academic Board meeting on 15 October 1983, the head of year 9 presented a detailed discussion document outlining proposals for the options procedure that year. The document proposed that the form tutors should be the key figures in the guidance of the students over their option choices. It was agreed that the document should be discussed fully at the next JCC meeting (Book 2: p27).

At the Pastoral Board Meeting on 20 October 1983, head of year 9's document was circulated, and it was agreed that the matter would be discussed at the next JCC meeting (Book 2: p36).

At the JCC meeting on 27 October 1983, the head introduced the document, saying he thought the proposals were good but there might be some practical problems. The development of self assessment amongst year 9 pupils was described. There was lengthy discussion about the best way to present information to pupils, involving form tutors and heads of faculty. The meeting agreed to let the head of year 9 go ahead with the proposals. This represented a change in the role of the form tutor in the school (Book 2: p37).

At the Academic Board meeting on 10 November 1983, there was some discussion about how faculty heads advised pupils about options. The head suggested faculty heads had autonomy over the best approach to teaching their subjects. The deputy head asked faculty heads to design their own faculty option document and pass it to him (Book 2: p44).

At the JCC meeting on 24 November 1983 the head hoped agreement could be reached on the options procedure. He outlined the main points to be considered. The head of year 9 described the different procedures operated by individual faculties, and suggested that in future a common format that his year team had devised be adopted. Detailed discussion about the

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proposed form took place. Effectively, the school's options policy was being re-written by the faculty heads and heads of year, with the head's consent. (Book 2: p46).

The new way of choosing options operated in March, and there was a brief post mortem on the new system on 22 March 1984.

At the Academic Board meeting on 15 November 1984, the deputy head suggested that the option handbook needed re-writing to have a more coherent tone. The discussion dealt with the timing of options, rather than a wholesale review of procedures (Book 2: p97).

Faculty autonomy and conflict

At the Academic Board meeting on 15 September 1983 (Book 2: p26) there was some discussion about who was responsible for the administration of the detention system. It had been agreed that faculty heads were responsible for sending letters out to parents to give 24 hours notice of detention, following an LEA guide-line.

At the staff meeting on 6 October 1983, the issue of detentions arose again. There was some discussion about whether assistant staff rather than faculty heads had the authority to sign detention letters. This led to a fairly vigorous debate ending in one of the staff inviting the head to clarify the position.

At the Academic Board meeting on 13 October 1983 the head expressed concern about the events at the staff meeting. He felt that the matter had already been agreed by the Academic Board. Staff at that meeting, who participated in making the decision, were obliged to support that decision publicly as a part of "cabinet responsibility". He felt that this had been breached at

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the staff meeting. He went on to say that the head of faculty must accept responsibility for what went on in his faculty, though subject teachers were expected to discipline their own classes. After some discussion, it became clear that the previous meeting had not produced an agreed position. Heads of faculty wanted to try a system where assistant staff had pre-signed detention letters which they could issue to children without the specific consent of the faculty head. After further discussion, the head agreed to a trial period for this amended policy for a half term (Book 2: p32).

At the Pastoral Board meeting on 20 October 1983 the head returned to the issue of cabinet responsibility that he had raised with faculty heads the week before. He said that year heads and faculty heads had a cabinet responsibility and that should be observed at staff meetings. If heads of year or heads of faculty had reservations about a school policy, they should discuss it with the head in private not air it at a staff meeting (Book 2: p36).

At the end of the Academic Board meeting on 10 November 1983 the head expressed the view that heads of faculty had autonomy over their faculty areas. They were free to decide the best way of teaching their subjects. In this way he agreed that the organisation of teaching groups was a matter for individual faculties rather than a part of a whole school view of class organisation (Book 2: p45).

At the end of a JCC meeting on 22 March 1984 devoted chiefly to budgets, the question of the completion of assessments by given deadlines was raised. The head made it clear that the responsibility for meeting assessment deadlines lay with the faculty head (Book 2: p66).

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I had a telephone conversation with the head on 28 January 1984. He was concerned that the decision-making process often failed to work as he wished. I described the way the research was showing the central importance of the faculty head in the decision-making process (Chapter 10). I explained the perception of assistant staff was that they did not really know the head and dealt exclusively with the faculty head. The head spoke of the problem he felt he faced with heads of faculty taking a very narrow sectional view rather than the wider whole school view (Book 2: p100).

Decisions taken at the Academic Board or Pastoral Board would usually be presented at the next staff meeting, where there was an opportunity for assistant staff to express their opinions. The agendas for all the meetings were open and staff were encouraged to bring issues to the boards or staff meetings for discussion. Thus assistant staff had two opportunities to express their points of view on a given issue; once through the faculty head or head of year at middle management meetings, and once directly at staff meetings.

In summary

This chapter has examined the changes in the "official" structures for policy-making in the school, and the head's view of the role of middle management in that process. It deals in some detail with the way the changes occurred, and comments on the way the head tried to establish a different culture in the school based on shared decision-making and democratic involvement of middle management staff. The head recognised that he faced difficulties in changing the culture of the school (Handy 1984). Nevertheless, he was prepared to take decisions that effectively changed the power base in school as a means to develop more autonomy, responsibility and a broader view amongst middle managers but found the change in culture difficult to establish.

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The chapter goes on to examine the problems that the head found with this development, in persuading middle managers to accept a different style of leadership. The change in the structure of meetings would appear to suggest that David Thomas wished to help promote this change in emphasis as part of the development of a different culture in the school and that this affected the power relationships of middle managers.

CHAPTER 10

CONSULTATION & THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS:

THE MIDDLE MANAGEMENT VIEW

Introduction

This chapter examines the reactions of middle management staff to the change in decision-making. This chapter relies mainly on questionnaire and interview data. Middle management staff were asked to complete an additional sheet in the questionnaire. This dealt with their responsibilities in an attempt to discover how fully they felt involved in major policy decisions. The questions examined three aspects of middle management responsibility: the development of policy; the appointment of staff and staff management, and their effect on morale. The closing section uses an adaptation of Williams' (1984) model of morale to analyse and summarise the observations which this chapter reports.

The Development of Policy

Middle management staff were asked what they saw as the role of middle management meetings (q1A). In 1982 their responses suggested that the middle management meeting was primarily a consultative, rather than a policy-making body. This contrasted with the head's statements that policy-making was a corporate responsibility, recorded in the interview notes (Book 1: p52). The responses in 1984 suggested a slight increase in the view of the meeting as a means of communication, though the majority still saw the meetings as consultative. The change may have reflected the head's desire to manage things more strongly (Chapter 9, p136), or the onset of industrial action. I think the first explanation was probably correct.

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When I asked how much influence middle management meetings had (q2A), there was general agreement in 1982 that middle management meetings influenced the head to some extent, but doubt about how much. The responses in 1984 showed very little change in this view.

I asked if middle management meetings were dominated by a particular individual or group (q3A). In 1982 the head was seen as having a large measure of influence, but no one particular group or individual was seen to dominate. There was little change of view in 1984.

The Appointment of Staff

I asked middle management staff to what extent they would be involved in a decision that directly affected their area of responsibility (q4A). In 1982 almost all middle management staff expected to be consulted personally about such decisions and there was little change in 1984. However, two heads of year said that they would not expect to be consulted at all, perhaps reflecting the way industrial action was beginning to affect relationships between the head and heads of year.

One senior member of staff said he would not be consulted. This member of the senior team gave consistently negative responses to almost all questions.

Asked if they would be consulted about a decision that affected their area of responsibility indirectly (q5A), most middle management staff said they would sometimes be consulted personally, depending upon the nature of the decision. When the question was repeated in 1984, two heads of year and one senior member of staff said they would not usually be consulted. Otherwise, there was a feeling that they were more likely to be consulted through middle

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management meetings, which perhaps reflected the change in the nature of the meetings described in Chapter 9.

I asked how much middle management expected to be involved if a member of staff was to be appointed within their area of responsibility. Two heads of year and one senior member of staff said they would not be asked to express an opinion. There was a difference in response between heads of year, who clearly felt less involved, and faculty heads and senior staff who expected to be involved at interview and appointment level. This in part reflected the change in the balance of power and influence in the school. It was also a reflection of the realities of the salary structure, with most appointments being subject based. There was slightly more involvement of staff in the appointment of colleagues in the 1984 survey.

As Managers of Staff

I asked middle management whom they regarded as responsible for the assistant staff (q7A). In 1982, the management of assistant staff was seen chiefly as the responsibility of the faculty head and the head. The head of year again was regarded as significantly less important. In 1984 there was little change of view. One of the deputies said that he thought the responsibility was shared between the head and the deputies.

I also asked whom they regarded as responsible for the maintenance of staff discipline (q8A). In 1982 most regarded the head as having the major responsibility, but the faculty head was seen as having more responsibility for discipline than the senior staff. In 1984 the senior staff were seen as having a more significant role. One explanation might be that the period of industrial action had

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polarised staff into 'management' and 'other' staff, with some of the responsibilities that faculty heads had assumed being handed back. Another possibility was that the head's planned restructuring of the senior management had brought about a change in the style of management of the school, and that the senior management team were becoming more effective.

Responsibility for the development of staff skills and expertise (q9A) in 1982, was thought by most to be primarily the responsibility of the faculty head, followed by the head. (The problems that might arise with an ineffective faculty head are discussed in Chapter 12. The question of a staff development policy across the whole school is discussed in Chapter 13.)

By September 1984 the situation had changed. The new senior staff were involved in staff development to a much greater extent than before. The heads of year were mentioned by very few staff.

The preparation of younger staff for promotion (q10A) was regarded as mainly the responsibility of the faculty head in 1982. By 1984 the faculty head was still seen as the key figure, but the head and senior staff's involvement had increased considerably.

In 1982, the faculty head was seen as a figure of great importance in the decision-making process, in appointments, in staff development and preparation for promotion. The dissemination of information about the school's policy (q11A) was seen as James Jones' responsibility. He had been a head of year, but relinquished that post to become Staff Co-ordinator in the autumn of 1982.

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By 1984 there had been little change; if anything, the head was expected to do more, and the faculty head less. James Jones no longer appeared to hold that responsibility. Again, responsibility appeared to be polarised by the industrial action. The cancellation of meetings meant management had to decide and promulgate to a greater extent than before.

The evidence suggests that faculty heads were seen by the staff as a whole to be the key figures in the school's structure. They were seen to have greater influence over the appointments and the preparation and development of staff for promotion. Heads of year, in comparison, were seen to have significantly less influence in these areas.

Heads of Faculty

The notion of delegation described by the head (Chapter 9, p126) embraced both the academic and pastoral areas, but the major impact, without any doubt, was in the academic areas of the school's life. Two examples illustrate the point.

The head of one faculty was dissatisfied with the mixed ability arrangements that were in operation when he was appointed. After considerable discussion within the faculty a consensus decision was reached that a change of organisation into banded groups would be made in the first three years. After the decision had been made, the faculty head saw the head to inform him of the change. The head expressed a personal preference for a mixed ability arrangement, as he thought it benefited the school socially, but the decision to move to a banded arrangement was implemented despite the head's view.

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Similarly, the head of another faculty wished to alter the faculty's policy on examination entry, so that more pupils would be entered for GCE in year 11. The arrangement of teaching groups would have to be altered within the faculty block. Again there was general agreement within the faculty to this change, and the faculty head informed the head about the change next time he saw him.

Heads of faculty thus enjoyed considerable autonomy over faculty decisions. They made changes that could have affected the image that the school sought to present to the community about itself. The changes could be regarded legitimately as matters that needed to be ratified by the head before the decisions were implemented. Although the head was informed of the decisions, his outline consent before the meetings were held was not sought. The faculty heads felt sufficient confidence in their delegated authority to get on with the business of running their faculties.

Heads of Year

The same sort of freedom of action was delegated to two year heads. One sought to introduce a pastoral curriculum in his year group and change the arrangements for the selection of options in the third year. He had the support of the head and the appropriate deputy in doing so. The scheme was a considerable success (Chapter 9, p141).

The other sought to put the presentation of examination certificates on a different footing, and again with the head's agreement, went ahead and organised a completely new way of running this public occasion. The week before the evening took place, the head commented that he did not know in detail what was planned for the evening, and he trusted that all was well. No other innovations of a similar significance in the pastoral area took place during this research.

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Comparison of middle management

The two events involving the faculty heads illustrate their sense of personal autonomy. There are two possible reasons for this. Firstly, the faculty heads were concerned with a narrower area in which they were the specialists, whereas year heads were concerned with broader sweeps of school policy where expertise was more widespread. Every teacher had some experience of pastoral care work as a form tutor.

Secondly, the heads of faculty, as noted above, were largely external appointments to do a specific and clearly defined task. The successful candidate, therefore, knew what sort of job he was coming into and had presumably shown a degree of flair in that area in his previous experience. The year heads were promoted internally. Their job was less clearly defined, and if they were to make a substantial contribution they would need some support and in-service training. The LEA had a specialist adviser for every subject area, whilst there were only one or two advisers whose responsibilities included staff development, or the provision of pastoral care. Heads of year were unlikely to be able to exercise the same amount of authority without considerably more in-service training and personal staff development.

Staff at Hillside all saw the faculty heads as enjoying more status and exercising more influence on the school than heads of year.

Middle managers views of the decision-making process

In the 1983 interviews, I asked the staff how much they felt they were involved in the decision-making process in the school.

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Faculty heads thought that the school's communications worked poorly, and suggested that the senior staff did not explain their policies sufficiently clearly, which sometimes led to confusion. One faculty head summed up what he saw as the problem when he said:

Communication from senior staff to the rest of the staff through faculty heads is very poor. Junior members of staff often get the wrong idea about what is going on because the people at the top find it difficult to communicate what they want to say to faculty heads and heads of year, and so everything becomes blurred, and junior staff are not clear what the policy is.

They thought that the real decisions were made at the academic and pastoral boards, and there was a responsibility on middle managers to communicate decisions to their staff. One faculty head described the decision-making process as he saw it, saying:

I would raise an issue at a faculty meeting. A wider issue would be raised at a staff meeting, though it would usually be raised at the Academic Board first. The head expects staff at the Academic Board to relay information back to their faculty staff.

Where this did not occur, the assistant staff expressed strong dissatisfaction with the faculty head.

(This issue is explored in more detail in Chapter 12)

Faculty heads noticed that there had been a change in the head's style, observing that:

When I first came, the head said that management meetings were for issues to be raised and discussed, but the final decision would be his, and so the meetings had little real power. Now he seems to have slightly changed that view and is more willing to accept a majority view, though if he felt very strongly he would refuse to give way.

This faculty head thought that:

Most heads of faculty speak on behalf of their faculty at the Academic Board and consult their staff. There were also staff meetings where staff could voice their opinion.

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However, one faculty head thought that:

the school is too big for easy discussion, and the middle management meetings provide a forum. Staff can influence policy, but not everyone can have their own way. If the majority of staff think something should happen, their view is considered.

Another faculty head said:

Anything can be raised and discussed at management meetings because we have greater control of the agenda. I can not think of a unanimous middle management decision that has not been implemented.

However, there was also a feeling that decisions were not taken by middle management meetings, but in the inner cabinet. They thought that the meetings tended to discuss specific issues rather than broad issues of policy, unless a problem had occurred that had a broader policy implication.

One faculty head described the situation saying:

There's a laissez faire situation, unless a problem is raised, when we are fully consulted about it, e.g. the homework issue. The final decision was in the Academic Board, which I think is the right forum.

Heads of year did not have as positive a view of the process as faculty heads. In 1983 one head of year said that policy decisions had been made about his year:

but they were not taken by me, and they didn't involve me.

He was dissatisfied with the consequences of the decision and suggested that:

it wasn't done as I would have liked to see it done if I had been involved in it, in fact as I would have insisted it was done if I had been involved. It was presented to me as a fait accompli.

Another year head suggested that:

pastoral life in the school is not paid much attention to. The pastoral leaders of the school do not have the same esteem in the Head's eyes as the faculty heads. This is shown when decisions and appointments are made, and when points are distributed. People who have far more say in the ethos of the school get paid far less and receive far less esteem than those who work on the academic side. I felt that my job was devalued when a member of staff who has been teaching for two or three years was considered for such a post.

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The other year heads expressed concern over the communications within the school, but recorded a general level of satisfaction about the way they were consulted on pastoral policy. They suggested that their meetings tended to deal with routine issues rather than the development of policy.

By 1986 four of the six heads of year were recent appointments. The industrial action meant that they refused to spend non-contact time with their year groups, at break and lunch time. This part of the year heads' work put them into direct conflict with the senior team, who were obliged to take over responsibility for pupil management at these times or close the school. The embargo on meetings meant that there were no opportunities for them to meet to develop policy and heads of year found themselves in a vacuum.

These changes in the seniority of year heads, and the increasing power and influence of faculty heads affected their relative status in the school. They provide further evidence of the change in the school's style and power relationships discussed in Chapters 8 and 9. This issue is discussed further at the end of this chapter.

Staff meetings

A faculty head suggested that staff meetings:

Influence school policy because the general things on the agenda are decisions that the management are happy for the staff to decide or influence.

He thought that the senior staff would accept the staff consensus on issues that were on the agenda of staff meetings, but:

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There is a selectivity about what goes on the agenda.

He also suggested that:

deciding what was up for discussion and what is not is part of the function of management.

Some faculty heads thought that consultation could be overdone, saying:

If you do consult staff, they feel that they should have quite an influence on the final decision. If you consult them and then come to a decision they don't like, they feel betrayed.

One faculty head questioned the suggestion that staff should expect to have a say in policy-making. He argued that:

In business you wouldn't have the chance to be rude to the managing director, or interrogate him. You might not even see him. The only consultation is likely to be with the guy immediately above you, and you learn to try and influence that guy, but then you accept the decision that is made.

I'm not sure that throwing out decisions to fifty people in a room and asking them to express a view on areas of big policy makes them any happier than they would be if they knew those decisions had been discussed at the top and passed down. I see no point in having a chain of management if you don't use it.

Heads of year thought staff meetings had little effect on school policy. One said:

Assistant staff can express their views at staff meetings if they are willing to speak up. Staff meetings influence policy on more superficial matters.

This view was reflected by another head of year who said:

Staff meetings seem to be to allow staff to give their views, but I think policy has usually been decided before. Most staff seem to feel they have no influence

Assistant staff perceptions of middle managers

Assistant staff did not perceive the two arms of management as equal in status. All the heads of faculty were paid scale four salaries, in one or two cases following a period of probation,

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whereas the heads of year were paid on scale two or three. Moreover, the method of appointment of staff to the two roles was different. Heads of faculty posts were advertised externally, and in most cases the successful candidate came from outside the school. County advisers and the Chair of Governors normally attended these interviews. When the appointment was internal the new head of faculty served a period of probation on a scale three. Heads of year posts were only advertised internally. In some instances appointment followed formal application and interview; on other occasions the appointment was arrived at less formally. It appeared that head of year posts were seen as opportunities for staff to develop and assume more senior responsibilities. Heads of faculty posts were seen as needing specialist appointments. This presented an impression of a staffing policy that sought to provide a ladder of promotion and development within the school whilst seeking to maintain the professional expertise of the academic subjects. The staff's perceptions of the two roles suggest that the faculty heads were regarded as more significant figures in the structure of the school than heads of year.

Asked who they would turn to if they were faced with a crisis in the classroom, e.g. an outright refusal to work (q7), there was a clear difference in response between assistant staff and middle managers. Assistant staff, almost without exception, saw the faculty head as the person to turn to, then the head of year. The middle and senior managers viewed the head of year as a much more central figure. This group, of course, included the faculty heads who would not refer students to themselves.

When the question was repeated in 1985, the importance of the faculty head had increased marginally. The head of year's importance had decreased, perhaps reflecting the reduced

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availability of heads of year following union guide-lines and not supervising students at break times, and the changing power structure in the school. Other parts of the research show that the faculty head had a very definite effect on staff in the faculty and the primacy of the faculty head as a key manager is further illustrated here.

I asked staff who they would go to if they were faced with a personal crisis that required time off work, e.g. a bereavement (q8). Despite information in the interview data about the head being inaccessible, almost all staff would approach him for help over a personal crisis. In a sense the question lends itself to that response with the formality of requesting time off, but most staff would go to the head at an early stage.

There was little change in the relative importance of the head between the two questionnaires. There was an increase in the number of staff who would turn to senior staff and to heads of faculty. Once again the difference in perception of the faculty heads and heads of years is underlined, with only one member of staff in four discussing a personal crisis with the year head.

I asked staff who they would discuss their application with if they were contemplating applying for a more senior position in another school (q9). Staff were invited to record more than one preference using a rank order. The response was highly stratified. A significant number of assistant staff said they would seek advice from colleagues or friends and the faculty head. The head was not regarded as a source of advice, though of course he would be formally involved with references, etc. At a more senior level the head quickly became the chief source of advice, suggesting that the pattern of accessibility varied with seniority.

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When the question was repeated in 1985 there was still a highly stratified view. The number of assistant staff who would seek advice from the faculty head had increased. The head of year had gained in importance as a source of advice amongst assistant staff, but there was little change in the number who would seek advice from the head.

This part of the research suggests that heads of year were not perceived as equal in status to heads of faculty. For most assistant staff, the faculty head was the chief source of advice and support. The head did not appear to be seen as a source of personal or professional assistance by most assistant staff. The changes in management structure appear to have given faculty heads increased power and authority at the expense of the heads of year.

In summary

These examples show that the head was actively trying to develop a more participatory management structure, as described in Chapter 9, p126.

On looking back through my notes, the range of subjects discussed falls into two categories. Some subjects recurred frequently. These usually related to behaviour and dress and could be taken to register a level of staff concern over the general discipline in school. (Rutter et. al. 1979). Day to day arrangements, and alterations to them when special functions were planned were also discussed.

The second category concerned alterations to the school's policy, and the majority of subjects raised came from staff outside the senior team.

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During the period of the research, the relative importance of the role of the head of year appeared to decline. A possible explanation for this lay in the fact that the heads of year's responsibilities were to do with management of children at breaks and lunch times. A period of industrial action when teachers' unions insisted on staff spending breaks away from the children was more likely to affect the heads of year than anyone else. In the same way, the cutting away of the "other" duties like meetings, gave faculty heads more time to concentrate on their faculty staff and their teaching.

The significant shift in the power base of the school discussed in Chapters 8 and 9 appears to have become reality in the staff's perceptions. The effect of this change in relative status on the morale of faculty and year heads is shown in the following diagram.

High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William's model. Middle Managers compared: Autumn 1993				
Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
Faculty heads				
High: strong individuals with clear ideas to develop own areas and school. Success in developing ideas, influencing & changing school policy.	High: group meet regularly & feel they have influence.	High: strong relationship with head & strong sense of shared purpose: sense of individual responsibility & freedom to make decisions. Becoming an In-Group.	High: group were able to meet individual targets & as a group were able to change group (school) targets.	High: financial rewards, prospects of promotion; senior status; institutional esteem from colleagues and senior management. Freedom to take decisions.
Year heads				
Low: Felt demoted and second class citizens. Less strong individuals. No strong sense of achievement.	Low: group meet but feel they have little influence: signs of group splitting.	Low: group lacks confidence and show uncertainty of their task aims. They do not show a strong common vision; becoming an Out-group Relationships with in the group satisfactory.	Low: Uncertainty over aims/vision affects their sense of achievement. Little experience of group success. See role as maintenance rather than developmental.	Low: reward received are lower financially and in terms of status than faculty heads, and are being reduced. Feeling of low esteem by the institution. Little freedom to take decisions.

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In a similar way, the re-structuring of the senior team in September 1984 led to a change, and that senior staff were now beginning to become more significant figures in the school.

I see this as a two-part change in the power relationships in the school. The first stage was marked by the reconstituting of the middle management team in February 1983. This move appeared to signal the relative ascendancy of the academic leadership over the pastoral leadership, a view confirmed by the salary levels and relative experience of subsequent appointments.

Following this re-structuring there were some significant changes in personnel. Several pastoral staff left or changed their responsibilities. A very successful year head left to take up a senior teacher post in September 1983. Another year head who had been highly successful went to another school in the area in September 1984. A member of the senior team was appointed to a deputy headship in another school in September 1984. Another head of year relinquished his role and accepted an academic responsibility instead. He explained that he found himself disagreeing with the head on the nature of the year head's role.

The second stage in the change in power relationships came with the re-structuring of the senior staff in September 1984. This development seemed to increase the influence of the senior management team, and give them a higher profile in the school policy process.

The onset of industrial action in April 1984, and again in December of the same year may have prevented these two new groups exerting the power that would have been possible in less troubled

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times. The increase in their influence was clearly beginning to be felt by the end of 1986, when the data-collection part of the research finished.

This chapter has looked at the role of middle managers in the decision-making process. It has shown how the head tried to develop the idea of team decision-making in middle management, and the extent to which he was willing to allow middle management staff to develop school policy. It has examined the way that the organisation of meetings was changed, and the way assistant staff were invited to take part when major policy changes were being discussed. There was also a strong, sometimes explicit, statement that middle management had a major responsibility to disseminate information and manage their staff. The extent to which this happened in practice, and its effect on the staff, is examined in Chapter 12.

It shows that the head was actively trying to develop a more participative style of management and that decisions affecting school policy were taken by middle managers, with the head's consent and acquiescence. The next chapter gives the views of the assistant staff.

CHAPTER 11

POLICY-MAKING: ASSISTANT STAFF

Introduction

This chapter examines the way assistant staff perceived the policy-making procedures at Hillside. It considers their views on consultation and their involvement in staff meetings. It looks at the way communication within the school operated and the effectiveness of the middle management structures. It concludes by examining the problems of stratification and the extent to which assistant staff felt involved in policy-making within the school. This chapter relies on data collected by questionnaire, interview and observation.

Consultation

Lyons, Stenning & McQueeny (1983) say that:

If representative approaches are to develop, especially but not wholly in response to younger teachers' expectations, they will need firm policy underpinnings; and headteachers will have to ensure that the meaning given to 'consultation' and its relationship to decision-making processes is made clear to their staff. (p22)

I asked assistant staff whom they would consult if they wished to raise a question of general educational interest, e.g. the development of a new course in school (q6). In 1982 the faculty was seen as the key area for the exchange of educational ideas. The year system was seen as a subordinate system, even by heads of year who opted to raise issues with faculty heads. Stratification showed in the relative numbers of staff who would approach the head. The assistant staff preferred the faculty head to the head in a ratio of 2:1. Middle and senior managers preferred the head in a ratio of 3:2. However, the responses may have been influenced by my choice of example; a new course is most likely to involve the academic side of the school's life.

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In 1984 the faculty was clearly still the key area for the exchange of educational ideas; the importance of year meetings had declined. The senior staff had gained ground and were more widely consulted. The stratified nature of the responses was largely unchanged from the previous survey.

When I followed the question up in the interviews, all the assistant staff felt everyone should be able to contribute to school policy because they had to implement it. One summed up their view when he said:

If you don't agree with something you have to implement, you are in an invidious position.

This view was echoed by another assistant teacher who said:

everyone has to implement the policy so they should feel they have had a share in making the decision.

This would also help assistant staff feel that they had a share in making the decision. This view reflected the views of the senior team (Chapter 8, p121).

How much consultation took place seemed a matter of debate. One member of the Established Assistant Staff thought the head wanted everyone to be involved in policy decisions. He said:

the head gives everyone a chance to be aware of what is going on and he tries to get us to talk about things. He would like to take a democratic decision. Sometimes he says something has to be done, but that is quite rare.

They accepted that on occasions a full democratic discussion was not feasible, suggesting that:

the head has only a limited amount of time to consult people, and sometimes it is necessary for policy to be made by the senior staff.

The faculty heads and year heads were seen as key links in the communication chain. All assistant staff (except faculty C) said that:

discussion and consultation comes mainly through the faculty, especially about matters relating to the subject, and through the head of year.

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The Junior Assistant Staff thought that:

school policy seems to be made after very little consultation with the bulk of the staff.

In their view decisions reflected the views of the middle managers. One described the situation saying:

I have views and have voiced them, but I don't think they carry any weight, even when I have spoken directly to the head.

Junior Assistant Staff thought that staff should be consulted whenever possible, so that they felt involved in decisions. They foresaw a problem if staff felt that they were excluded from the decision-making process and decisions reflected the views of the middle managers:

It is essential staff feel they have a say or they will resent something imposed on them from above, and people will not pull in the same way. They will pay lip service to things but go their own way.

One Junior Assistant said:

If you exclude people from the decision-making process, they will feel alienated from the general aims of the school.

An important factor in the consultation process was the apparent disagreement within the senior staff. One teacher summed up the general feeling, saying:

Senior staff have to make the decision in the end, but they don't always agree among themselves, and they say they can't agree.

Several staff made the point that the school was a busy place and consultation took a lot of time.

The head has only got a limited amount of time to go round and find out what people think.

Staff Meetings

The value of staff meetings was also a subject of disagreement. The Junior Assistant Staff thought:

policy is not really discussed at staff meetings.

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In their view staff meetings discussed side issues, like bags, uniform and staff entertainment, rather than educational issues and philosophy. They did not influence school policy. In their view, the only way to achieve a situation where people felt happy about what they were doing was by agreement. One described the situation saying:

Staff meetings don't really influence school policy because the assistant staff won't speak up.

Another suggested that staff meetings:

tend to centre on bags and uniform and always come back to those things.

Established Assistant Staff thought it should be possible to influence school policy:

If you impose something, people will react, perhaps because they disagree, perhaps simply because a decision had been imposed on them even though they might be in sympathy. In order to maintain and increase staff morale, there needs to be as much discussion and consultation as possible.

Middle managers were perceived to have greater access to policy-making, but the only way assistant staff could influence school policy appeared to be to go and see the head. One said that:

I don't think many junior staff feel able to go to see the head, so they moan in the staff room. I often get the impression that the senior staff do not hold the junior staff in very high esteem.

Another said:

Staff meetings are dominated by middle management. The head talks to middle management but you don't often see him talking to ordinary teachers.

One Junior Assistant member of staff summed up his frustration when he said:

I have not been in situations where policy is discussed except in staff meetings. I have thought of saying things, but as a junior member of staff, you don't. I think staff meetings should influence school policy, but I'm not sure they do. Some staff seem to have more influence than others.

They thought that more important matters were decided before the meeting. Staff meetings were the only situation Junior Assistant Staff saw policy discussed. One said:

I would not feel able to say things in that forum. Staff should feel that they can go to see someone about ideas, but many junior staff felt unable to do that.

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The Established Assistant Staff thought that they were:

consulted on most matters through staff meetings. There are some issues which the head thinks are important where he just makes the decision without consulting the staff (except the senior staff).

They suggested that they were consulted:

on those issues where the head allows a democratic decision.

One reason for the problem with staff meetings was that they were frequently the forum for the discussion of bad news. I attended 14 staff meetings and received reports of a fifteenth. Two were positive; both dealt with the MSC/TVEI curriculum initiative. These were both in December 1982.

Four meetings were dominated by internal disagreements and were generally hostile to the senior management. The first of these took place in September 1982. The restructuring of middle management took place in February 1982. Between March and December 1983, three other meetings were characterised by challenges to the senior staff led by disgruntled heads of year.

Four meetings were dominated by bad news from the LEA and related to cuts in spending, cuts in the supply budget, problems with cleaning and problems with travel expenses. These all took place in 1984, mainly in the spring term.

Three meetings, (all in November of different years), were uneventful.

Actual consultation

In fact the head consulted the staff as a whole on a number of issues and invited their participation. TVEI, assessments, reports, behaviour, options and detentions were all

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discussed either at staff meetings or middle management meetings opened to the whole staff. I have discussed these issues in the context of middle management, and revisit them now from the perspective of the assistant staff.

TVEI

In December 1982 the head devoted a staff meeting to discussion about the new Training and Vocational Education Initiatives (TVEI) from the Manpower Services Commission (MSC). (Book 1: p89) He turned a scheduled middle management meeting the following week over to an open meeting to continue to discuss the issue. (Book 1: p93)

Assessments

In February 1983 middle managers discussed assessment, and it was agreed that their proposal to use computer technology for assessments should be put to the staff. (Book 1: p100)

The next staff meeting was on 3 March 1983. At that meeting the Head planned to discuss both these developments. However, the meeting did not go as planned. The head made a simple remark, reminding staff of the need for vigilance on petty issues of behaviour, and thanking them for all their efforts. The staff turned the meeting into a rerun of the meeting of 30 September 1982, which had been so hostile to the deputy head.

The head allowed the discussion to take its course, and consequently ran short of time to raise the two proposals with the staff as a whole. By the time they reached this point on the agenda only 34 staff (out of 50) were present. The discussion of assessments did not take place, the head simply referring to the proposals by middle managers that were on the notice board. (Book 1: p105-110)

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On 15 September 1983 the deputy head reported that there had been no further comments from staff about the amended assessment system. It would be implemented in year 10 and 11, for a trial period and if successful would be extended to the whole school. (Book 2: p56)

Reports

In February 1983 middle managers also discussed reports, and the head proposed that a document should be presented to the staff before the final decision was taken. (Book 1: p100)

The staff meeting on March 3 has already been described. Consequently the discussion of reports was limited to showing the proposal to the meeting and summarising its pros and cons.

(Book 1: p105-110)

An open Pastoral Board meeting was held on 17 March 1983, to which all staff were invited.

The head chaired the meeting. He asked the head of year responsible for the original discussion paper to outline his arguments to the staff. Other staff were then invited to add their responses to the original document. Copies of all documents were circulated to those present.

The various options about report styles were put to the meeting, and there was an overall majority for one of the amended documents. The head confirmed that a decision in principle had been taken at the meeting. Further suggestions about the way it could be tailored to individual faculty needs should be passed to the deputy head by the end of the following week.

(Book 2: p1)

Behaviour

The concerns about behaviour in general and uniform in particular that had arisen at staff meetings in September and March were raised again at the end of the open Pastoral meeting on March 17. They formed the main part of the agenda of the pastoral meeting on April 21.

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(Book 2: p1) Following those discussions, the staff meeting on May 5 discussed a pro-forma prepared by the senior staff that would enable form tutors to check and report breaches of uniform. The meeting broadened out into another general discussion of uniform standards, and the meeting agreed to several changes in policy (Book 2: p12).

Options

On 15 September 1983 the question of rewriting the options' handbook was raised at an Academic Board meeting. The head made clear that he wanted a free and full discussion of this issue (Book 2: p26). The item was referred to the next meeting on October 15 where the head of year 9 presented a discussion document (Book 2: p34). The same document was considered at the pastoral board on October 20 and again at the JCC meeting on October 27. The discussion continued on November 17 with faculty heads, and on November 24 at the JCC, when the new system was agreed. This issue was not raised at a staff meeting, but the main input came from the year 9 pastoral team (Book 2: p36 & 37).

Detentions

The staff meeting on 6 October 1983 included an item about detention. A new pro-forma had been produced to meet LEA requirements about detentions being notified to parents in writing twenty-four hours before they took place. The head suggested that the letters should only be signed by faculty heads or year heads, not assistant staff. (Book 2: p27) The matter was raised for discussion at the academic board on 13 October 1983. The head said he was anxious that the right procedure should be established so that faculty heads could deal with the detentions effectively. The head bowed to pressure from faculty heads to allow assistant staff to sign detention letters, but made clear they were responsible for the actions of their faculty staff. (Book 2: p31)

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The discussions about TVEI, assessments, reports, behaviour, options and detentions were all instances where the head invited assistant staff involvement. However, the main involvement still came from the middle management tier, and despite the efforts made to involve the assistant staff, they still did not feel involved in the process

Communication

I asked how involved staff felt in the decision-making process. Staff were asked how they received information about day to day school arrangements. In 1982 communication was perceived to be chiefly via notice boards and staff meetings. Some staff clearly received more information through personal contacts, either with their head of faculty or senior staff they knew well. By 1984 the importance of staff meetings had declined, probably due to industrial unrest. Senior staff obtained most of their information from other senior staff or notice boards (q3).

I asked staff what they thought of the flow of information (q4). In 1982, most of the sample thought the flow of information was adequate or less than adequate; only 25% saw the information flow as good or very good. When I repeated the question in 1984 the chief change was that more staff thought that the flow of information was poorer than in the previous survey. Two staff differentiated between faculty information, which they described as excellent, and general school information, which they described as less than adequate.

I also asked staff whom they regarded as responsible for keeping them informed about day to day school arrangements (q5). In 1982, there was a stratified view. Responsibility for communication was seen by assistants as belonging to James Jones, a member of staff with

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specific responsibility to manage communication, the faculty heads, and/or the heads of year.

All middle managers saw the responsibility belonging to the senior staff or James Jones.

When the question was repeated in 1984, there was a considerable change from the previous survey. James Jones was no longer responsible for communication and most staff expected the head and senior staff to keep them informed. Assistant staff still looked to faculty heads and to a lesser extent heads of year for information.

These responses showed that the middle managers were less clearly the key communicators in the school structure, probably because the industrial action had stopped meetings, and therefore prevented the middle managers having access to information on a regular and organised basis.

I asked staff whom they contacted if they wished to alter the day to day school arrangements, e.g. by arranging a school trip (q6). In 1982, the answers show the importance of the faculty head in the school structure; almost as many responses identified him as the person to approach as the head. The primacy of the head was to be expected, given the need for his formal consent to all alterations of arrangements.

When the question was repeated in 1984 there was a change. The importance of the faculty head in the school structure had increased; more responses identified him as the person to approach rather than the head. The senior staff had a much stronger response than in the previous survey.

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A frequent complaint from staff at all levels was about routine administration:

there are too many petty administration things that we don't really know about. We seem to be changing things the whole time because insufficient thought has been given to the decisions in the first place.

I don't like the way the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. I think the head needs to say, "Look, there is a lack of communication at management level and that needs to be improved."

They felt that poor communication was a sign of a lack of interest in them by the senior management of the school:

the head is out of touch with what is going on. He should know what people are doing and he should make it his business to know.

This section shows that middle managers had an important role in communication, though not all recognised the responsibility. The importance of the senior management team had increased following their reorganisation in September 1984. Staff said that they would approach the head about some matters, despite his alleged inaccessibility.

Structure

The assistant staff view of the management structure was fairly clear. Heads of faculty were seen as key figures, and were the face of management with which most assistant staff came into contact. Good faculty heads were perceived as professional friends and built up a considerable amount of faculty loyalty and goodwill. Year heads, with one exception, did not register the same degree of influence in the eyes of assistant staff.

Almost all staff below senior level regarded the faculty as the most significant structure in the school. The questionnaires showed that staff turned to faculty heads for information and for advice over professional matters. Faculty heads were responsible for solving disciplinary problems with pupils that occurred within their faculty's lessons, or referring them to more

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senior staff if the problem was an intractable one. Faculty heads were also seen as the channel of communication for ideas from assistant staff to senior staff. The faculty head was seen as a significant figure in the promotion of more junior staff, and in the maintenance of appropriate professional standards. If a member of staff's work was causing concern, the head of faculty was expected to attempt to solve the problem with the teacher concerned, or seek help from senior staff if necessary.

Most faculty heads established good informal relationships with their staff and adopted a policy of giving assistant staff opportunities to develop schemes of work, etc. and these were usually implemented. The faculty head's influence also extended to the allocation of classes within the faculty, as the school used a block timetable. A member of staff in one faculty expressed a desire to specialise in teaching disadvantaged pupils and the head of faculty enabled this. Two new staff in another faculty expressed concern over the Lower School syllabus, and with a little guidance from the faculty head, prepared a completely new approach to the subject that was implemented. Another member of staff who had a subject responsibility within a faculty, returned from a course with a plan to revamp his subject's work. The faculty head agreed, supported the proposal, and secured additional funding for the project through the County advisers.

However, communication through the faculty structure was not always seen as successful. Staff in faculty C thought that communication was very poor. One Junior Assistant member of the faculty said:

I don't think my views would reach the head through the faculty head. I have asked him to raise things at middle management meetings but I don't know if he has, as there is no feedback.

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He suggested that it appeared as if the head had told faculty heads not to tell the rest of the staff what was going on at middle management meetings. The head's clearly stated view was that middle managers had a duty to report back to their staff.

One striking exception to the dominance of the faculty system was to be found in the work of a particular year head who developed a very successful team approach to pastoral care (Chapter 12, p197). The tendency in the school was for year heads to be engaged in managing day to day affairs. The responsibility of the faculty heads involved future planning and organisation of the school, and the consequent development work that was likely to be necessary.

Stratification

Members of the senior staff were seen to be relatively remote, rarely coming into the staffroom and sitting down to talk to staff. Almost all staff expressed a desire for more contact with the senior staff in general and the head in particular. The observation that members of the senior staff spent relatively little time on developing personal relationships with the rest of the staff was acknowledged by them. All senior staff interviewed expressed concern over this area, and thought that the withdrawal of goodwill in 1984 and 1985 had had a major influence on personal relationships and made the situation worse. Senior staff had to spend more time on duty and in crisis management than they liked, and the desire for a return to "normality" was very strong. The research implied that a conscious decision by the head and the senior staff to spend a greater amount of time in the staff room and on informal staff relationships would have a beneficial effect on staff morale.

The staff also appeared to be highly stratified, with the assistant staff tier divided into two sub-groups. The Junior Assistant Staff were only in touch with the senior management through the

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faculty head. The Established Assistant Staff had informal direct contacts with members of the senior staff, but the main channel of communication operated in a similar way. Even at staff meetings, middle managers were seen to dominate the discussion.

Stratification was also apparent in the different perceptions of staff about access to the head. All faculty heads and the Established Assistant Staff found the head easily accessible and approachable. The Junior Assistant Staff perceived the head as inaccessible. This differential perception had the effect of alienating them from the decision-making process and affected their morale. They saw most of the responsibility for this situation lying with the head. They thought that:

the head should take an interest in the staff and pupils, and be more available and get to know more about his staff. He needs to consult with his deputies more fully, and ensure they were available to staff who have grievances or problems.

In Summary

This chapter has demonstrated that the assistant staff at Hillside did not feel involved in the decision-making process. Their views were quite consistent on a number of issues.

There was a strong feeling that the head should be seen personally round the school, taking an active interest in pupils and staff, and that he and the other senior staff should devote more time to personal relationships.

Several assistant staff suggested that the senior team did not always speak with a united voice, a view shared at almost all levels in the school. The lack of top level communication affected the assistant staff's confidence in the communication network in school.

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Despite the attempts by the head to widen the scope of discussion, the assistant staff felt that they had little direct influence on school policy matters. In part this is due to the way they were involved through the forum of the staff meetings. My field notes record a number of contentious staff meetings, with relatively senior middle managers publicly taking issue with the head and senior team. The focus for these confrontations, invariably initiated by the middle managers, was usually an aspect of school discipline: the open school policy and uniform recurred regularly. The head allowed staff to express their views. He did not rebuke them in the public forum of the staff meeting, but in the more private forum of the middle management meetings, and then usually in the most general terms by re-stating his view of corporate responsibility. This behaviour contrasted with the style of leadership of John Robinson, who had used staff meetings to disseminate information and was unwilling to accept dissent.

The assistant staff saw themselves as observers of staff meetings, rather than participants. When the meetings were at their most hostile and controversial, junior staff, who felt reluctant to speak at the most constructive staff meeting were reduced to total silence. In a very real sense, they were not able to join the discussion about policy, as the agenda had been hijacked by middle managers eager to pursue their own agenda in a public meeting.

The fact that the head allowed the meetings to be dominated in this way had an effect on the assistant staff's perception of him. It was perceived as weakness, rather than strength, and recurred in the interviews when assistant staff spoke of the head not behaving in the way they expected him to.

The effect of this dominance of staff meetings was to obscure the real attempts that the head was making to increase the democratic process in the school. The public reaction was part of

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the reaction of pastoral leaders to their effective removal from the centre of power that was a consequence of the head's developing leadership style. The two elements fed off one another. The more pastoral leaders opposed the head in middle management and staff meetings, the less he was likely to return power to them. The morale of both pastoral leaders and head suffered, and the matter was only really resolved when staff left and the senior team was restructured in September 1984.

The perceptions of assistant staff varied depending on their position and the faculty they belonged to. Established Assistant Staff felt they were more involved in decision-making, and were more likely to speak at a staff meeting. Junior Assistant Staff felt detached from the decision-making process and never spoke in staff meetings. Junior Assistant Staff in faculties with a very supportive and democratic heads found they were involved in decision-making through the faculty. For Junior Assistant Staff in poorly managed faculties, there was no access to policy-making through the consultation process. This issue is examined in more detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 12

THE ROLE OF MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

Introduction

This chapter examines the role of middle managers and the contribution they make to the level of staff morale. The different levels of morale in four of the faculties are examined and compared with the influence of the heads of year on staff attitudes. This chapter relies on interview data.

Marland (1971) suggests that the onus of care for the individual teacher rests clearly and heavily on the care, concern and involvement of the head of department. He goes on to say that the individual teacher's job satisfaction also depends on the pivotal role of the head of department. He suggests that heads of department who fail to obtain the support of their team are likely to face the disintegration of their area of responsibility.

Blackburn (1983) proposes that leaders of pastoral teams need to develop opportunities for team members to talk to one another, both to strengthen the team identity and enable the task to be accomplished. He proposes that this process has to be planned and can not be left to chance. The pastoral head must create a structure and process to facilitate interaction. He quotes Robert de Board (1978):

The problem is to create and maintain an effective organisation in which work can be done efficiently, but where at the same time the worker can exhibit and develop his essential humanity. (p29)

Heads of Faculty

The way in which the middle management staff managed their areas of responsibility had a key influence on the way that assistant staff felt about their involvement in decision-making in the school. The research looked closely at the work of four faculties. The two others had a steady

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turnover of staff during the research and fewer members of those faculties were interviewed for that reason. Each faculty had a distinct identity, reflecting the way the faculty head managed his responsibilities.

Faculty A

Faculty A enjoyed a very informal and relaxed atmosphere. The faculty head spoke to all his staff regularly and the faculty had a tradition of socialising together. The atmosphere was essentially one of personal and professional friendship, and all members of the faculty thought that they were able to have a say in the decisions that were taken. Staff in this faculty were drawn from both Established and Junior groups of assistant staff.

There was agreement that the faculty was the chief forum for discussion. The faculty members all said that they were fully involved in policy-making within the faculty. They could express their opinion to the rest of the faculty and were happy to agree with decisions about which they had reservations, because they had been consulted.

One Established Assistant member of the faculty summed up their point of view when he said:

If I have a chance to express my point of view and join in the discussion, I am happy to accept the decision, even if I don't especially agree with it, because at least I have had my say.

By the second set of interviews, the staff's perceptions had changed a little because of the industrial action. The head of faculty A explained that:

there have been no formal meetings, but I still talk at some lengths informally about issues within the faculty.

He regarded his faculty colleagues as professional friends. He also talked to other faculty heads about what the school was doing and what the school's aims were, but informally; there was no formal structure because of the action.

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Staff in the faculty said that they had continued to discuss things informally, especially one member who was working with the faculty head on developing a new course, who said:

The faculty head and I have a lot of informal discussions.

Morale in this faculty was consistently high, and the staff were a close-knit group with a high regard for the skills of the faculty head. The distinctions between Established Assistant Staff and Junior Assistant Staff were not significant in faculty affairs. The faculty scored highly on Williams’ (1984) model of morale. The faculty head inspired confidence and shared his vision with his staff. The faculty’s success in developing new courses gave them a sense of achievement. His leadership enabled team members to have a high level of self esteem in their faculty roles, and this carried over into other aspects of their school life. The faculty head was known to lobby for faculty members if promotion was being discussed, and was seen to be successful in this respect.

High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William’s model				
Faculty A				
Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
High: success in developing new courses.	High: group socialised together in and out of school.	High: faculty head inspired confidence and shared his vision.	High: success in developing new courses.	High: faculty head lobbied for faculty members promotion.

Faculty B

Faculty B had a somewhat more formal structure, with regular meetings. These were underpinned with frequent informal contact. The distinctions between Established Assistant Staff and Junior Assistant Staff were not significant when faculty matters were discussed in interviews, though they were strongly identified when it came to whole school issues. The faculty policy was thrashed out at faculty meetings, and it was not automatically the case that the view of the faculty head was carried. There was a strong awareness that the wishes of the

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faculty staff were put to the senior management even though their view was not always accepted.

Speaking of faculty decisions, the faculty head said:

there are three types of decisions. Those I take myself without any consultation; those I leave to the staff to decide completely; and those I discuss with everybody, but do not allow them to take a vote, instead forming my decision from their views.

He said he made the decision where he felt he had an overall view. He involved staff in decisions that affected them and the overall faculty view, and there were some decisions where he thought a more individual view was best. He thought:

there is a danger of consulting people and then over-ruling them for other reasons which would leave them feeling disgruntled.

All members of the faculty thought they were very fully consulted by their faculty head.

There is a lot of discussion. If the faculty head wants to introduce something he talks it over and finds out what people think.

In one instance, the faculty head was unable to persuade a majority of his colleagues to follow his view on the organisation of academic groups. A small majority of the faculty wished to move from mixed-ability grouping to a setting arrangement. The faculty head described the process that led to the decision, saying:

the changes have been made democratically, even against my own preference in one case, but the other staff were set on it, and they seemed very pleased with the change.

Members of the faculty said they had discussions about educational issues in faculty meetings rather than as a school, and that the decision about the way to organise teaching groups was taken:

after a lot of discussion. The decision was carried on a majority vote.

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One Established Assistant member of the faculty, speaking of his ability to influence decisions said:

I have only as much influence as anyone else on discussion in faculty meetings, which usually go on a majority vote.

Although the change to the organisation of teaching groups might have implications for other aspects of school organisation, the faculty head said he had not discussed the changes with the head. He felt:

I have carte blanche to run the faculty.

All staff felt they had a chance to have a say. Decisions were arrived at democratically, not imposed by the faculty head. They thought that members of the faculty got on well with one another and could agree policy. One Established Assistant member of the faculty said:

we are a well-rounded group who get on with one another and can agree policy.

The general feeling was that:

Once the faculty head is persuaded of the value of an innovation, the head would be convinced without too much difficulty. Faculties have a free hand about how they organise themselves.

Once the action started, the faculty head briefed the faculty through memos because there were no official meetings, though:

We sometimes have "unofficial" meetings.

The experience of morale in faculty B was very similar to faculty A. Here too, the faculty head inspired confidence and shared his vision. The high level of democracy and consultation encouraged a sense of team identity, and the faculty's success in modifying their teaching approach and developing new courses improved their morale. The faculty head's leadership enabled team members to have a high level of self esteem in their faculty roles, and this carried

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over into other aspects of their school life. The faculty head successfully supported staff when promotion was being discussed.

High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William’s model				
Faculty B				
Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
High: success in modifying teaching approach & developing new courses.	High: strong sense of democracy and consultation.	High: faculty head inspired confidence and shared vision.	High: success in modifying teaching approach & developing new courses.	High: faculty head lobbied successfully for faculty members promotion.

Faculty C

Faculty C had a very laissez-faire approach to the development of new initiatives. The faculty head saw his role as allowing staff to develop their own proposals for change. The differences between Established Assistant Staff and Junior Assistant Staff were clearly defined in this faculty, and coloured faculty and school issues. The network of contacts within the faculty was essentially informal and therefore less structured. Faculty meetings were not a regular feature of the faculty management, but the faculty head was always available to the members of his staff for consultation. He said:

Faculty decisions are arrived at by discussion and consultation. Staff make suggestions and if we think it’s a good idea we wander down to the staff room and ask other people what they think. We tend to do it very informally, but I think change takes place surprisingly frequently

The faculty head said there was little problem implementing the changes. He saw the head or deputy; sometimes the head said he wanted to think about an issue, but he usually agreed. The faculty head could not remember any occasions when the head had told him to do a particular thing. He left him with almost complete autonomy. He was not forced to do anything he disagreed with in the faculty area.

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He thought that no one in his faculty was willing to take the responsibility to update and develop the curriculum. He described this as:

my major dissatisfaction at the moment. You feel you are out on your own. I don't think we have anyone in the faculty who is sufficiently strongly committed to the idea of curriculum development to take the lead.

The faculty head did not see the development of curriculum innovation or helping more junior staff with new developments as part of his responsibility.

The faculty head's view was not shared by all his staff. There was a strong feeling that the faculty lacked any forum for discussion. All members of the faculty commented that:

we are not involved in discussions about faculty policy because we don't have meetings.

One Junior Assistant member of the faculty was incensed because:

decisions about my teaching area are taken without me being consulted by the head or the faculty head. I would like to be consulted. I have voiced my opinion but don't think it carries any weight. Staff should be able to express their views through the faculty head, who should represent those views to the head and the senior staff.

By the second series of interviews, there had been little change. The faculty head said:

we have been living from day to day. Most decisions have been made for us.

Staff in the faculty reported:

there aren't any organised meetings within the faculty. This isn't just due to the industrial action. There weren't any before it started. There is no forum for debate within the faculty.

Staff in this faculty felt that the lack of meetings disadvantaged them when school policy was being discussed. One Junior Assistant member of the faculty summed the position up when he said:

You never know what happens at middle management meetings or what is on the agenda so you never have the chance to say, "I would like this or that question discussed." If policies are discussed at middle management and decided upon before they come to the staff meeting, then we are not included in the discussion. Other departments have fairly regular department meetings, so we find out about things later on, after they are decided. It also makes it difficult to make a contribution,

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because you don't know what is coming up to be discussed, as you don't know what is on the agenda.

Thus the lack of faculty meetings effectively disenfranchised the faculty members from participating in whole-school decisions. They also felt that the faculty head's approach did not help them develop personally or professionally. One Junior Assistant commented:

we need to meet as a department and discuss the best ideas and approaches. The faculty head does not really inspire me or encourage me with new developments. You need encouragement and inspiration if you are developing something new.

Lyons, Stenning & McQueeney (1983) described the problems that might arise if middle managers were not accountable for their stewardship of their responsibilities, saying:

Where formal responsibility is assigned to middle management but there is little or no accountability at these levels, the system may fall into disrepute. (p22)

Staff in this faculty had low levels of morale. There was no sense of leadership, vision or teamwork within the faculty, and the staff showed signs of loss of interest. The complacency within the faculty and the lack of new developments and the sense of lack of fulfilment undermined self esteem and led to demotivation.

High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William's model				
Faculty C				
Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
Low: little sense of success: signs of loss of interest in faculty task.	Low: no sense of faculty identity.	Low: faculty head did not inspire confidence and share vision.	Low: complacency leading to lack of success: staff adopting a pedagogy of survival.	Low: lack of achievement led to low self esteem and demotivation.

Faculty D

Faculty D underwent some difficulties during the period of this research. The faculty had a significant number of Established Assistant Staff. The faculty head was very keen to push

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through a number of new ideas, but in doing so aroused opposition from other colleagues. The opposition centred on the method of attempting to implement the changes rather than on the changes themselves.

The faculty head explained that he wanted to develop consensus management in his faculty. He described his approach, saying:

I would present a discussion paper at a faculty meeting. I wouldn't impose anything.

However, he was aware that:

some policies have been agreed by staff who are not fully convinced of an idea, but are willing to give it a try.

He believed that everyone in the faculty could influence policy, saying:

Anyone can suggest something or change something and various people have commented or made suggestions.

He did not feel very happy about the way the faculty was running. He thought he saw the subject differently from other members of the faculty, which led to a conflict of philosophies and described how he had tried to manage the difficulty:

I have tried to be careful not to bulldoze people, tried to be diplomatic and make the most of staff goodwill. There is a disagreement both on content and methodology.

He wanted more staff to go on courses and read more books about teaching the subject. He felt that he had tried to show what he wanted doing by his own example but it did not appear to be working. He felt demoralised, because there had been some specific problems recently. He interpreted these as:

The staff feel that I have tried to do too many things too quickly and put pressure on them, and perhaps not managed them properly. They think that I am not aware of their different interests and personalities.

He described how he had tried to manage people individually, and spoken to them as a group, but without success. He felt they saw his wish to introduce new ideas as pressure, whereas he thought it was a part of the process of building a lively and thriving department.

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His first solution to this problem had been to try to manage the faculty more formally, but that had not been successful. He identified part of the problem as the staff's perception of him. He thought:

staff find me demanding and critical, and I would agree that I am, but I thought my criticism was constructive. I've tried to praise what's good. I thought I had done that well, but I don't think the staff would agree.

He explained that during the summer term he had spoken to the faculty about changes in policy. The faculty staff misunderstood what he was trying to do and it caused bad feeling for the rest of that term. After the summer break, he tried to introduce some new ideas about profiling and faculty detentions, but:

people mis-interpreted what I was saying and the meeting blew up.

The faculty head felt that the breakdown in relationships was his responsibility and said he felt he had to:

sort out the problem, and to go round and speak to the staff.

The other staff in the faculty were equally concerned about the problems over relationships. Whilst there was agreement that the head of faculty listened to the views of the rest of the faculty staff, there was doubt about how much influence their views had. They acknowledged that the faculty head listened to colleagues, saying that:

the decision to turn to mixed-ability teaching was a result of the wishes of the faculty head, but it was discussed by all the staff. The faculty head carried the general policy, but listened to and agreed with another proposal for partial withdrawal (of children with special needs). The faculty were all involved in that policy decision.

The difficulties within the faculty came to a head over the issue of detentions discussed at the Academic Board on 15 September 1983, and the way in which the faculty head had reported the discussion to the faculty. The Academic Board meeting had also been attended by another

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member of the faculty, who implied that the faculty head was misleading the rest of the faculty. The faculty head admitted that he had represented certain views at the Academic Board meeting without consulting the faculty. The faculty staff were angry because he had given the impression that they had been consulted when they had not been.

The faculty head implied that the rest of the faculty were not supporting him. The staff felt the faculty head was trying to change the faculty's detention policy and was ignoring their views. Both sides agreed that the meeting became very difficult. It ended at 5.30 with nothing resolved. One Established Assistant member of the faculty described the situation as:

open rebellion because we weren't consulted.

A caucus continued the meeting afterwards in the staff room. The caucus felt that this incident was only a symptom of other difficulties that were perceived as being caused by the faculty head, and another Established Assistant member of staff suggested the problem was:

a lack of awareness of the needs of other members of staff in the faculty, a lack of sensitivity, and an indifference to the abilities of each member of the department. The contribution that other members of the faculty could make to new developments was ignored.

Another Established Assistant member said that there was a need for a light touch, and that:

the faculty should be run more positively, with praise for things well done.

The problem was identified by one Junior Assistant member of the faculty as:

The faculty head is saying that the faculty has to be run on his lines. The way it was put was really very dogmatic. The final decision rests with the faculty head, and he expects us to accept the way of running the faculty that he lays down.

At this point the personal relationships in the faculty appeared to be seriously fragmented and the disagreement had become known amongst the pupils. The faculty head attempted to see staff individually to try and resolve the difficulties, but with mixed success. Staff felt that he consulted them and listened to what they said, but;

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we still end up doing what he wants.

Despite these difficulties, the faculty head was perceived to be successful in other respects. Members of the faculty saw that the faculty head was committed to some new ideas. They felt that they wanted to give his ideas a try, and some of the things he suggested had been very successful.

Throughout the autumn of 1983, relationships within the faculty were at a very low ebb, and morale was very low. Here the problem was not a lack of leadership but a leadership that failed to inspire confidence, and provide a vision that was shared. Disagreements about aims and methods led to a breakdown in the group's relationships, and the faculty head was seen to lack inter-personal skills by the rest of the faculty. These difficulties did not lead to the problems Williams (1984) identifies, lack of motivation and disillusionment, because the group had a shared experience of success under the leadership of the previous faculty head. There was no sense of apathy or loss of interest, or of complacency: rather a fierce determination that a different leadership style should be developed. Financial recognition was not an issue for most of the faculty. Most were paid additional allowances for other responsibilities. However the damage done to their self esteem by the faculty head's leadership style was a main motivator in their determination to change the way the faculty operated.

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High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William’s model Faculty D: 1983				
Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
Low: disagreements about aims and methods but no sense of apathy or loss of interest, or of complacency: rather a fierce determination to oppose the faculty head, and try to change his leadership style.	Low: the group relationship skills of the faculty head were seen as a problem by the rest of the faculty, and there was no sense of faculty identity.	Low: the faculty head did not inspire confidence: his vision was not shared by the faculty staff.	Low: disagreements about aims and methods, but no disillusionment, because of shared experience of success under previous faculty head: rather a fierce determination to oppose the faculty head, and try to change his leadership style.	Low: most were paid additional allowances for other responsibilities. Low self esteem because of faculty head’s leadership style.

By the second series of interviews in 1985, the situation had changed, and relationships within the faculty were transformed. The faculty head adopted a different approach to the decision-making process and involved staff to a much greater extent.

The faculty head thought that they were working better as a group. He described how he had changed his management style. He now compromised more. He appreciated that he had to treat each person differently. He recognised their strengths and worked on those, rather than expecting everyone to work in the same way, as he had done at the beginning. He thought he was more realistic in his approach. The staff in the faculty had become better friends, so they were willing to try new ideas. He explained that this was:

a conscious decision to change my management style. When things were going wrong, I had to stop and analyse why, and obviously I hadn't taken into account the personalities involved.

The faculty had altered the teaching arrangements in the fourth year, introducing a withdrawal group for slower learners. Although this represented a significant change in pupil management, the faculty head had not spoken to the head about it because:

the head never interferes. He has always made it clear that every faculty has autonomy in organisation, etc.

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The staff in the faculty said that there had been a significant change in the relationship with the head of faculty, who had changed his approach and the tensions had been resolved. The faculty started to meet regularly, despite the action, and began to work together as a team. As a result, the whole of the faculty's policies had been reviewed, and the staff were prepared to stay behind after school to prepare aims and objectives for every year.

The development of team unity, and the sense of co-operation, even when the industrial action was taking place, was a significant development after all the difficulties. One faculty member summed up the staff's views, saying:

The faculty came together and all took part in the final formulation of the policy. Everyone was happy with the policy, and the faculty has started to build on each other's strengths. As a result the faculty head is seen as trying to make life easier for the faculty.

The staff in the faculty interpreted the change in management style as:

the faculty head has mellowed a great deal, and learnt a lot from his mistakes. He is much more relaxed about the way he talks to the faculty and what he expects from us. The faculty works much better for it.

The faculty was transformed in all aspects of morale. The change in leadership style meant that the vision was now shared with and accepted by the faculty. The staff's group identity was restored through the work on faculty aims, and the change in the faculty head's personal management style. The self esteem of the faculty staff was immediately improved as the problems were solved.

High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William's model Faculty D:1985				
Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
High: through working together on faculty aims.	High: faculty now worked as a team & felt supported by faculty head.	High: the faculty head's vision was now shared amongst the faculty.	High: through working together on faculty aims.	High: self esteem was immediately improved as the problems were solved.

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The experience in this faculty demonstrates clearly that the style of management of a leader has a direct effect upon the morale of the staff team. The serious dispute, which reached the ears of both students and senior staff, arose because the faculty head was perceived to be neglecting team and individual needs, and concentrating on the task needs alone. The resulting breakdown in relationships, which caused great anxiety to all concerned, further underlines the importance of the way staff feel about their work, and the way they are led. Staff interviewed used words like *dreadful* to describe the situation within the faculty. Once the faculty head changed his management style, the task objectives were united more effectively with group and individual needs. Morale was improved significantly, to the extent of staff ignoring union advice about the industrial dispute to work together developing a common set of aims and objectives for the faculty. This positive use of team building through aims contrasts with the general experience of the staff as a whole to the school's aims and objectives exercise.

Faculties E and F

The heads of the other two faculties, whose staff were not interviewed so fully, also took their responsibility to look after their colleagues very seriously. One of the faculties regularly organised social gatherings on a faculty basis and despite some difficulties with staff being widely spread across the site, tried to maintain frequent informal contacts. The other faculty head also saw his role as looking after the members of his team. He described in an interview how he always tried to speak to members of his faculty each day, as he thought it had an effect on the rate of absenteeism.

Faculty Heads: Reflections

The faculty heads were seen as key figures in the school. Most thought seriously about their staff management role, and took trouble over the maintenance of morale within their faculty.

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The system is best described as structured informality. Most heads of faculty made a point of having informal contact with their staff on a regular basis, as well as regular business meetings.

In those faculties where the contact was most frequent, perhaps once or twice a day, the faculty identity was strongest. Where contact was more erratic, or left to chance, the faculty identity was much weaker. The contacts were often casual and of a social and personal nature rather than related to school matters, and in this way the team identity was strengthened and developed by the faculty head. Where there was little opportunity to meet either formally for business meetings or informally over coffee, as in faculty C, morale was most likely to suffer.

Heads of Year

By contrast, the heads of year, with one exception, were unable to achieve a similar team spirit. One reason for this lies in the staff's perception of the heads of year and faculty heads. Only one of the six heads of year in post in 1982 was still a head of year in 1986, and he had had a post to post exchange for a year in 1984/5. Several heads of year left the school during the research, one for promotion to a senior teacher post, and heads of year often had other responsibilities. One was responsible for careers, another for design, a third for special needs. Appointment to head of year posts was usually internal, rather than external, and the heads of year had to learn their job as they went. The fact that most heads of year were new to their posts had an effect on the way the staff perceived them. Moreover, the ability of heads of year to influence the lives of their staff was significantly less than faculty heads. They could not influence the teaching programme and had little capitation to allocate to new ideas that staff might want to develop. As all staff were members of both a faculty and a year, it is not surprising that the faculty head with his much greater powers of patronage emerged as the stronger entity.

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One head of year succeeded in developing a very strong sense of team identity with his year team. He had the support of the senior staff and also had considerable teaching experience. His team were largely drawn from Junior Assistant Staff, and for them membership of this year team was the only bright spot in their professional life. He was keen to develop a pastoral care programme using active tutorial work in his year. He arranged meetings with his team of tutors, who were mainly younger staff new to the profession, and discussed the introduction of the scheme. The year staff agreed to try to introduce a measure of tutorial work, and meetings were held on a regular basis. A very definite sense of identity was created within that year team and the head of year emerged as a figure of significance equal to any faculty head. Possibly the reason that that head of year was able to change the staff's view of his role was because he was actively engaged in forward planning and development work. The tendency in the school was for the heads of year to be engaged in managing day to day affairs. The responsibility of the faculty heads looked to the future organisation of the school, and the consequent development work that was likely to be necessary.

This head of year thought that pastoral work was regarded as less important than the academic side of the school. He felt that the pastoral leaders of the school did not have the same esteem in the head's eyes as the faculty heads. He thought that this was shown by the way decisions and appointments were made, and the way promotional points were distributed. He felt that:

If the head of year fell down on his job the effect could be so much more far reaching than if a faculty head did, but it does not seem to be important to the senior staff. When they have a pastoral vacancy the senior staff scrub around to find someone they want to keep to give a scale post to, to fill it rather than get someone to do the job.

He felt sure that the head would not advertise nationally for a head of year, but he wouldn't dream of appointing a head of faculty internally. He described the situation saying:

I don't mean by that that the pastoral work is not being done valuably, but that the rewards are not there that I think should be.

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He involved staff in decision-making, saying he discussed his aims with staff in his year team. He felt he knew the staff in the team very well, and they decided as a group what they wanted to try and achieve. They wanted to change the school's policy on the options system so they discussed it with other members of staff. The head of year then presented his proposals in a document to the middle management groups.

His staff saw policy-making in the year in a favourable light, explaining that:

We work as a very close team. Although we have specific meetings, a great deal of discussion comes out of the incidental chat, and almost before we met it seemed as if we had agreement on the options' proposals document.

The staff working in this year group felt themselves to be part of a team. They explained that all the ideas put forward were accepted by the head of year and put into the document for him to take to the Academic Board and the senior staff. The staff felt:

we were very involved in the decisions and thought they were entirely right.

The key quality they identified was that the head of year:

always listens to what we have to say, even when staff are very new in the school.

Some of the team thought things were more open in the year than in their Faculty, C, and said that people were not afraid to say what they thought.

This year head developed high morale amongst the staff who worked with him. His leadership style helped build a close sense of team identity and the group enjoyed success in developing their options programme, giving high levels of satisfaction. Most of the team were young assistant staff, at the bottom end of the salary scale but their sense of self-esteem was enhanced by their group success.

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High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William’s model Year Group A				
Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
High: success in developing Options programme.	High: year group worked as a team & felt supported by year head.	High: confidence in year head, and vision shared amongst the year team.	High: success in developing Options programme.	High: self esteem derived from group success and ability to influence school policy.

Despite the considerable success he enjoyed, and the high regard he was held in by both assistant staff and senior colleagues, the sense of dissatisfaction of this head of year continued to grow.

There was not the same sense of loyalty to or involvement in decision-making in other years. Staff did not feel involved in decisions about other years, and described themselves as:

working day to day and reacting to problems.

They did not feel committed to pastoral work, and felt they had no involvement in decision-making in the year group.

In summary

This chapter demonstrates that it is possible to map the morale of different teams within a school, using Williams’ (1984) model. Identifying the level of morale in different teams provides a useful additional tool in studying how well the school’s management structure works. Morale alone is not a satisfactory yardstick, but it does provide an indicator of the success of leadership, which is a component in the achievement of the team’s and the organisation’s task objectives.

Middle managers have a significant role in the decision-making process and as managers of staff. Faculty heads reported a considerable degree of autonomy in their faculty areas. They

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reported greater ease of access to the head and described communication as easy and informal. The problems of accessibility reported by other staff did not appear to be a feature of faculty heads' experience. Heads of year reported greater difficulty, perhaps reflecting a difference in the perceived priorities of the school. However the head of year described above clearly saw himself as enjoying the same autonomy and status as a faculty head. He brought about radical change with the full support of his own team and the senior staff.

Some faculty heads were very conscious of their role as managers of staff and morale. Where the faculty head took time and trouble to involve staff in the decision-making process, and to encourage a social as well as professional relationship (faculties A & B), morale was consistently high. Where the faculty head appeared to ignore the feelings or views of staff (faculties C & D), frustration was high and morale low. In faculty D in particular, the frustration boiled over and relationships broke down until the faculty head reviewed his approach. Once he changed his management style the morale of the faculty increased dramatically.

By contrast the heads of year were seen, with the exception already mentioned, to be of little significance in the management of staff, whose first loyalty appeared to lie with the faculty.

The differences of morale in different middle management teams are shown in the following summary diagram.

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High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William’s model: A comparison between different middle management teams.				
Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge
Faculty A				
High: success in developing new courses.	High: group socialised together in and out of school.	High: faculty head inspired confidence and shared his vision.	High: success in developing new courses.	High: faculty head lobbied for faculty members promotion.
Faculty B				
High: success in modifying teaching approach & developing new courses.	High: strong sense of democracy and consultation.	High: faculty head inspired confidence and shared vision.	High: success in modifying teaching approach & developing new courses.	High: faculty head lobbied successfully for faculty members promotion.
Faculty C				
Low: little sense of success; signs of loss of interest in faculty task.	Low: no sense of faculty identity.	Low: faculty head did not inspire confidence and share vision.	Low: complacency leading to lack of success: staff adopting a pedagogy of survival.	Low: lack of achievement led to low self-esteem and demotivation.
Faculty D: 1983				
Low: disagreements about aims and methods but no sense of apathy or loss of interest, or of complacency: rather a fierce determination to oppose the faculty head, and try to change his leadership style.	Low: the group relationship skills of the faculty head were seen as a problem by the rest of the faculty, and there was no sense of faculty identity.	Low: faculty head did not inspire confidence: his vision that was not shared by the faculty staff.	Low: disagreements about aims and methods, but no disillusionment, because of shared experience of success under previous faculty head: rather a fierce determination to oppose the faculty head, and try to change his leadership style.	Low: most were paid additional allowances for other responsibilities. Low self-esteem because of faculty head’s leadership style.
Faculty D: 1985				
High: through working together on faculty aims.	High: faculty now worked as a team & felt supported by faculty head.	High: the faculty head’s vision, was now shared amongst the faculty.	High: through working together on faculty aims.	High: self-esteem was immediately improved as the problems were solved.
Year Group A				
High: success in developing Options programme.	High: year group worked as a team & felt supported by year head.	High: confidence in year head, and vision shared amongst the year team.	High: success in developing Options programme.	High: self-esteem derived from group success and ability to influence school policy.

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The head's "hands off - trust the faculty head" style meant that shortcomings in middle management were not always picked up or dealt with adequately. Lyons, Stenning & McQueeney (1983) found that:

Few schools appeared to regularly assess the head of department against departmental performance in the context of agreed departmental and school policies. (p18)

There were different perceptions of the role of middle managers as staff managers and communicators. The head saw the middle managers as responsible for communication and the dissemination of information from the senior management to the assistant staff. Middle managers did not appear to fully accept this view. The problems in faculty D arose in part because of a misunderstanding of this role. The frustration in faculty C arose because this role was not being fulfilled. Assistant staff consistently thought the head was responsible for communications with the whole staff, and blamed him for shortcomings that were not entirely his fault.

The middle managers who actively sought to develop team involvement and personal support did so as a result of a personal decision. The perception that team management, morale and welfare was predominantly the responsibility of the middle managers was not overtly stated and was not part of the culture of the school. It represented one of the changes the head was trying to introduce.

The evidence in this chapter clearly demonstrates that the quality of middle management is a key factor in the maintenance and development of staff morale.

CHAPTER 13

WHOLE SCHOOL ISSUES

Introduction

In my definition, **morale is the sense of personal and group worth generated when a group of people sharing a common purpose are able to work together in harmony and with a sense of mutual understanding and support to achieve their common objectives.** Williams (1984) has defined five factors that affect morale: Tenacity and Fortitude; Group Cohesion; Leadership Synergy; Adventurous Striving and Personal Reward. His model shows the benefits that can arise as a result of high morale, and the problems that may develop when morale is low.

So far, this thesis has examined Williams' concepts of morale in the context of a secondary school. I have examined the formulation of common aims, the development of leadership style, the role of decision-making as a means to enhance group identity and the role of middle managers as leaders of sub-sections of the organisation. The focus has been on the workings of groups within the school. This chapter examines the range of issues that affect all staff and their morale, irrespective of their place in the school hierarchy. It examines the way a change in leadership affected the extent to which teachers felt they were involved and valued as members of the school community, and attempts to identify the issues that caused concern.

Evidence in this research already indicates that the head faced difficulties with his first senior management team and his heads of year as he sought to change the style and emphasis of the school. Both these groups had enjoyed a substantial power base under the previous head, and were concerned that the change in style was eroding that power. The senior team's resistance was usually raised in terms of team unity and coherence that had been a feature of John

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Robinson's club culture. For the more senior and experienced heads of year, resistance focused on pupil management. When resistance manifested itself at sectional and staff meetings, the assistant staff were observers of the power struggle, and not enabled to enter the debate. The opportunity for the head to reach over the heads of his senior team and pastoral staff to the assistant staff directly was limited. Individual assistant staff might interpret a personal development interview as an opportunity to discuss an increase in responsibility, with a corresponding increase in salary, which was difficult at a time when falling rolls were beginning to affect the school. The main constituent groups that David Thomas could appeal to were the faculty heads, and those assistant staff with some experience and additional responsibilities, who constituted the Established Assistant Staff. He was, therefore, unlikely to be able to please a significant number of staff, who saw their personal staff development in terms of a change in the school's style and direction that implied a return to a different culture. Responses from staff reflect this division.

This chapter explores the factors that staff said affected their morale that resulted from the development of a new leadership style. These manifested themselves over the issues of **accessibility, communication, staff development, staff welfare, pupil management and job satisfaction**. During this period the situation was perceived to be deteriorating by staff, and the data collected forms the backdrop to the subsequent action, discussed in more detail later in this chapter. This chapter relies on interview data.

Accessibility

I have already suggested that the head was perceived to be inaccessible, and that this affected teacher morale. However, there was agreement that access to the head by the senior staff was

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easy and informal, and that any member of staff could see the head early in the morning or after school. They said that the head would always give his time, and be available to staff.

Middle managers agreed that the head was accessible to all staff despite often being out of school. When he was in school it was very easy to get to see him. He was usually available before and after school:

If he's busy you might need to make an appointment.

They agreed with the senior staff that the head did not send colleagues away to see someone else, and described him as responsive if people particularly wished to see him. They said that the head was very good with staff when they went to see him individually, and did not accept the general criticism that he never had time for staff.

The Established Assistant Staff suggested that, although he was out of school quite regularly, which made it difficult to see him immediately for a quick word, they had been able to see him the following day, and he had been very approachable.

The Junior Assistant Staff said that they saw very little of the head and thought it was difficult to fit in time to see him. However, they agreed that they could stay behind and make an appointment to see him if it was a personal matter, suggesting that:

he's not that elusive and you can see him if you persist, if it really matters.

However, there seemed to be a difference between the actual accessibility of the Head, and the perception amongst the staff of how a model head should be accessible. The picture of an ideal head they described suggested someone who was pro-active, seeking to make appointments with assistant staff to discuss their ideas. They thought that the head should be in

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school all the time, and be seen in the staffroom or around the school regularly. One Junior Assistant suggested that the head:

does not seem to spend time doing things I think a head should do, such as talking to staff, especially junior staff, which I think is important.

This idealised perception of the head occurred at all levels of staff, from senior managers to the most junior and recently appointed. It manifested itself as a feeling that the senior management should be doing more, and there was a measure of agreement about the way forward.

Junior Assistant Staff thought that the head:

should get into the staff room to talk informally and be seen to associate himself with the ordinary members of staff so that they might feel more wanted, as if they were making a contribution to the school, and therefore the head wanted to talk to them. (Cf. Woods 1979)

They suggested the head should make sure he praised staff and thanked them for their efforts making sure that junior staff received recognition of what they were doing. They thought he should get round the school, talk to staff and see how he could help junior staff, perhaps by creating a careers structure and advisory service for staff. (Cf. Nias 1980) This view was summed up by the Junior Assistant teacher who said:

It's the head's job to work on the morale of his staff and see to their welfare, and make sure they feel they are really appreciated. If morale can suffer because of the head, he must have the power to do something to improve it, even during the action.

Another Junior Assistant teacher thought the head could do something if he:

spoke to all the staff. Staff want to know that he is with them and will speak up for them. They want a leader, and want to know he speaks up for the school at the LEA.

This desire for a simple leadership role, and the sense of need for identification, reflects Rice's (1965) view that people seek simple solutions to complex problems.

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The dissonance between these views reflects the dilemma that Hellowell (1990) describes for the head teachers he interviewed. Hillside staff had a clear perception of what the ideal head should do; walking the job, talking to staff and maintaining order in the corridors. This ideal head would give a clear and decisive lead and consult staff regularly and fully. He would feel fully accountable to the staff and recognise their professionalism, and the contribution they could make to the school's development. He would be accessible at all times, but still manage the school boundary, the governors, the LEA and government initiatives.

This idealised view seems to look back to the days when the head's main role was more clearly defined. At that time there was less innovation and industrial action, and management and the curriculum were the result of a general consensus. That consensus has now been challenged, and a consequence is an expectation that headteachers should fulfil their past role and take on a new management role simultaneously. This dissonance causes pain for the heads, as Hellowell (1990) observes, and uncertainty for the staff. Ball (1993) describes it as part of the government's deliberate attempt to deskill the profession and create a differential between educational managers and teaching technicians. It identifies school management in highly personalised terms, and seems to take little account of developments in team management of schools (Richardson 1973).

One view of this ideal of headship was shown by a member of the Junior Assistant Staff who thought that:

the head does not really care about me or what I am doing or where I am going. He does not have enough contact with the staff. The head does not act in the way I think a head should. He should be the guiding light of the school, but he does not appear sufficiently interested, and the senior staff don't seem to be really bothered about how the rest of the staff feel.

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Attitudes to accessibility were changed by the dispute, with senior staff and faculty heads continuing to regard access to the Head as easy. Heads of year, who had found it difficult to follow union advice about working to contract at the same time as carrying out their role in the customary way, were less certain. They also found access relatively easy, if rather uncomfortable. The perceptions of the assistant staff were further polarised between the Junior Assistant Staff and the Established Assistant Staff.

Communication

Lyons, Stenning and McQueeney (1983) found that communication was a key issue in staff relations. They suggested that insufficient attention was addressed to the purposes of the communication and as a consequence inappropriate mechanisms were frequently used in an endeavour to communicate with staff. Lyons et. al. suggest that headteachers who had gone to considerable lengths to establish good personal relationships with assistant teachers were in a better position to withstand the dispute. Consultation through delegation was the commonest pattern of consultation. Ensuring that effective consultation took place was a problem, and middle management was seen as the weak link in the process. Few schools established or maintained common standards relating to the holding of meetings, minutes, written departmental policies or objectives. Few schools had clearly defined management policies. Very few had sections explicitly devoted to policies, decision-making or communication and consultation with staff. The attitude of heads emerged as the key determinant of whether effective communication and consultation with staff took place within the school.

Communication was seen as something of a problem at Hillside. The senior staff responses in the interviews in 1983 suggested that they thought it was difficult to judge staff morale as they

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were not often in the staffroom. The lack of cohesion of the senior team, and ready access to the head were seen as factors that affected morale.

Feelings amongst the rest of the staff reflected this view to some extent, but there was a feeling that one reason morale was quite low was because:

There's a feeling that the hierarchy do not communicate among themselves, which leads to blunders and undermines morale. Staff get very fed up with the inefficiencies of the management in the school. They think they are not consulted, which I don't really think is justified.

The overall feeling was that all staff would welcome improved consultation and communication, and some show of interest by the senior staff, especially the head, in their work.

Staff Development

David Thomas was aware of the difficulties he faced with staff development, and sought to provide an internal promotion route through the pastoral system, that would give staff additional responsibilities or additional experience. He was concerned that opening up staff development opportunities would raise the expectations of staff. They would expect additional incentive allowances that he knew would be difficult to meet in the context of falling rolls and staff contraction. (Weindling and Earley 1987)

I asked staff at Hillside who they expected to advise them about their career development (q10). In 1982 the response reflected the stratified nature of the school, with many assistant staff turning to head of faculty, whilst most middle managers turned to the head. Other members of the senior staff were not referred to at all.

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In the second survey in 1984, the stratified nature of the school was even more marked, with significantly more assistant staff turning to heads of faculty. Most middle managers turned to the senior staff, especially the head. The number of assistant staff asking advice from senior staff had increased significantly, perhaps reflecting the re-structuring of September 1984.

I asked senior staff about staff development. In the 1983 series of interviews they thought that there was a need to develop a constructive approach. This raised problems because staff assumed development meant promotion, and therefore more money, and the head was unwilling to raise expectations only to dash them. One member of the senior team said:

The head feels that the moment you allow staff development interviews money will become the main motive.

Middle managers thought that:

staff development is a major part of staff morale. If staff do not feel that they were being stimulated or developed professionally, their morale is going to sink.

The head of year mentioned in Chapter 12 said he would:

sit down and talk to my staff about what they are doing. When I did this with my tutors, I discovered that they thought it had been stimulating and increased their morale.

The heads of faculty A and B took a similar interest in their staff's development. All three sectional leaders had high levels of morale in their teams.

The Established Assistant Staff did not think there was any policy of professional staff development.

It is left to the faculty heads to encourage department members to improve their performance, attend courses, prepare for promotion, etc.

They thought the head should encourage staff development, and saw his willingness to let them attend courses as some evidence that he did. Apart from that:

staff development is largely in the hands of the staff themselves.

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There was a definite feeling that an annual interview with the head would be welcome. This would give the head an opportunity to get to know staff better and discuss their career and future. To the Junior Assistant Staff, easy access to the head was seen as crucial. What mattered was that:

someone shows interest in your work. It happens in some faculties. The head should be concerned about staff welfare and development because in the end he needs a happy staff if he is to have a happy school, and that creates the right environment for staff to succeed.

By the time of the interviews in 1985, there had been little change in staff development policy. The industrial action of 1984-6 seriously affected the opportunities for formal staff development, and it was impossible to send staff on courses when no one would cover them.

The senior staff suggested staff development should offer a chance for everyone to talk to a senior member of staff in confidence about their career. They thought the interview should be confidential. There was agreement that:

the staff are the biggest resource in the school, and their goodwill is very important.

The main problem was seen as a question of time, and the lack of staff development opportunities was seen as more to do with communication difficulties because of the action, than a lack of concern.

They also reported the head's continuing concern that in many staff's view staff development equated with additional salary points as well as greater responsibility. He was concerned that an active policy of staff development would raise expectations amongst staff that would be dashed when staff realised that there was little money available for promotion, as falling rolls began to impact on schools. (Weindling and Earley 1987)

It's very difficult. We need a programme of staff development, interviews etc., but the danger is it will raise staff expectations.

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The middle managers thought that the Head was trying to help staff with their career development, not so much as an active policy of staff development in the school, but as a response to staff who enquired. They said that the head made it easy for them to see him and was very co-operative and helpful and supported them over their professional development. They thought that although staff development was part of the head's job in theory, in practice, it came low on his list. They did not think the responsibility was entirely the head's, and that:

staff have to prepare themselves for their next post.

The middle managers also thought that a conversation about career development would be a useful part of an appraisal.

The Established Assistant Staff reflected the middle management view, saying that the head depended on staff instigating their own staff development interviews. They described it as:

a service that is there if people wish to take advantage of it.

They said that the head was quite easy to catch if staff were around at the end of the day, and was willing to stay quite late. To them, the head was:

far more approachable than many people think.

The Junior Assistant Staff wanted a more pro-active role by the head. They described a lack of an active staff development policy as evidence of lack of interest by the head in their careers. They thought it would be better if staff felt the head was interested in where they were going and what was in the individual member of staff's best interests as well as the school's. They saw this as evidence that the head was:

losing touch with the staff.

Several suggested that they felt they were:

in a backwater, with no promotion or development open to them.

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Several staff, from both groups, recalled that one of the first things the head had said when he came was that he was going to:

interview all the staff, and his door would be open if anyone wanted to come and see him.

Staff who had not actively sought the head but were waiting to be invited for an interview felt that the head had not fulfilled this promise. They interpreted this as a lack of interest in their careers. However, some staff said their faculty heads made a point of discussing their futures with them, and with other staff in the faculty, and saw this as a sign of a good faculty head.

Once again there is a clear distinction between the views of the senior and middle management, and the Established Assistant Staff on one hand, and the Junior Assistant Staff on the other. There is an implicit expectation that staff development is part of the head's responsibility, rather than something that can be delegated within the senior team and middle management staff.

Staff Welfare

Hillside's management structure identified a senior teacher responsible for covering absent teachers as having a role looking after staff welfare. He also had responsibility for other major areas of the school, so the time that he could devote to staff welfare was essentially limited.

There was also a degree of informal staff welfare provided by staff acting as a body in an impromptu way. They sent flowers to colleagues who were ill and there was informal staff support for colleagues who experienced domestic crises. These were not within the scope of the senior teacher.

The senior staff thought that they did not really have time for staff welfare:

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Things come to a crisis before anything is done. We should be able to handle things better.

Middle managers thought that faculty heads and senior staff had a role as professional advisors:

Staff should not be thrown in at the deep end. New staff are sometimes given rotten classes and left to struggle, when with a bit of thought they could become reasonable teachers. It is one of the most important jobs senior staff have. Probationer teachers especially need help, but it isn't just probationers. Some more experienced staff need help and advice; to be given a new challenge or change in values or attitude.

Some staff fall by the wayside because they have not been given enough support. When the head says that there are five or six members of staff who are having difficulty, it is all the staff's problem, not just the head's.

Most staff shared the view of the faculty head who said that there was also a place for a different sort of personal welfare based on a mentor system:

There ought to be a system where every member of staff was attached to another member of staff so there was someone they could go to talk to.

Not all staff agreed that there was any need for a structured policy of staff welfare, suggesting that it would not make any difference. One faculty head said:

You talk to the people around you, and it's left to the individual. It's up to the individual to do something about it.

He suggested that:

if someone cracks they'd be treated with sympathy. That might be a job for the faculty head, but the pastoral care of staff isn't really a realisable ambition. Looking after people when they have a personal crisis is important.

This member of staff thought that professional problems could be tackled, but he was not sure personal ones could be.

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For the Junior Assistant Staff, the notion of staff welfare was bound up with the way the head managed the school, and was part of an assumption that it was his role. They thought a more pro-active style was needed. In their view:

the head does not spend the time he should with or on the staff. He does not seem to know the staff at all. Participation would improve morale. If you are alienated from the decision-making process, a pastoral care system won't help.

The Established Assistant Staff thought that it was a little more complicated. They thought that:

staff do not feel that they are valued and appreciated. Staff can go to see the head. They can knock on his door but he is not always there, which is a problem.

They said that the head was very approachable, and very caring, in a way that very few staff had seen. It was not just concern for the school, but for the person. There would be a wider appreciation of what the head was trying to do if he was more available.

The disintegration of the school's social fabric during the action of 1984-6 had some effect on the staff's attitude to the way the school viewed their personal welfare. Senior staff explained that staff welfare could not be left to just one member of the senior staff:

we all have to pitch in on occasions, dealing with people we have good informal contacts with, as well as we can.

Middle managers thought that staff wanted to feel that they were important and that the school cared about them, so the member of the staff responsible had to know the staff and enjoy their respect. They thought that the head:

has been very supportive of staff with serious personal problems over the last year, and other staff who have known about those problems have also helped.

There was some evidence that faculty heads were beginning to take a greater interest in staff welfare:

not as the result of a policy decision, but more a realisation that more could be done.

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The Junior Assistant Staff did not think there was a system of pastoral care of staff in place. They sometimes added that there was no-one on the senior staff that they would want to go to talk to, and remarked that:

the senior staff are distancing themselves from the battle zone.

It was another issue that they expected the head to deal with personally in a pro-active way, suggesting that he was not aware that staff wanted to talk to him. They took this to mean that:

he is not interested in whether people are happy or not, and though he cares in many respects, he does not show it.

However, the Established Assistant Staff thought that the notion of staff welfare had taken stronger root, perhaps as a result of the first round of interviews. Their perception was that staff having a difficulty should discuss it with the faculty head. In their experience, although there was no formal structure, this approach to staff welfare was fairly successful:

A good faculty head will take time to talk to staff and listen.

They did not think staff welfare was something that could be further systematised, as people's needs were different. This positive response was limited to faculties A, B and D, and reflects the differential response to the issue of faculty leadership explored in Chapter 12.

Once again there was a strongly differentiated perception of the nature of and responsibility for staff welfare that largely reflects the stratification of the school.

Pupil Management

Staff concerns about uniform and discipline surfaced from time to time in all parts of the research, and became a focus of disagreement at staff meetings in early 1983. Some staff thought the change in style of pupil management by the new head was causing some of the difficulties, though this view was not consistent. One member of the Established Assistant Staff said:

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The overall standard of uniform is falling. Not sufficient effort is being made in maintaining standards of uniform. Difficult behaviour problems are not being dealt with properly by heads of faculty and senior staff. Although junior staff refer the children to them, the problem is never resolved.

However, not all the changes were seen as bad. Another member of the Established Assistant Staff said:

the school is much more relaxed, and staff are not continually being asked to be a policeman all the time.

There was general agreement that morale was more affected by events involving staff than events involving pupils. Staff explained:

problems with the children are transient. You take problems with the children for granted as professionals. You don't expect problems to arise from professional teachers.

Staff wanted:

the recognition of people you work with, and like people to acknowledge extra work. When people do not work together, there are more disciplinary problems and therefore morale suffers.

Teachers thought that both staff and pupil management would be improved if the senior staff, and the head in particular, were more pro-active and more visible around the school.

Job Satisfaction

I asked staff how they would describe their job satisfaction (q16) in the questionnaire in 1982.

The responses suggested that more senior staff had more job satisfaction than assistant staff.

Half the senior staff described their job satisfaction as high. Only a quarter of assistant staff described their job satisfaction as high. Over half the assistant staff rated their job satisfaction as only fair.

Most staff interviewed in 1983 enjoyed their contact with the children and a sense of achievement, whether in raising the literacy standards of a poor pupil or getting good exam

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results. The staff were convinced of the intrinsic value of their job. Most staff, when asked about their classroom work, spoke with enthusiasm. The frustration and dissatisfaction came from the perception that they were undervalued by the administration of the school in particular and society in general. The intrinsic value of a good job worth doing and done well implied a need for recognition from a more senior professional. The faculty head might be able to fill this role, but most staff expressed a wish to know their value to the institution as a whole. This implied a need for the senior managers to know at first hand the quality of work taking place in the school. The opinions of advisers were also valued, though the frequency with which advisers were in school and spending time with assistant staff was, understandably, quite limited. One member of the senior staff said:

There's nothing like a pat on the back, the top man coming round.

In 1983, most senior staff expressed a high personal level of job satisfaction. Further career development was a cause of concern to two colleagues. The senior staff appeared to derive great satisfaction from tackling and resolving problems and managing crises successfully.

Most middle managers and assistant staff also described their job satisfaction as high in 1983. They thought that sometimes the job was frustrating, sometimes satisfaction fluctuated, but most staff said they would not continue if there was no job satisfaction.

Where there were difficulties within a faculty, responses were more critical. A Junior Assistant teacher in faculty C said his job satisfaction was:

high as far as the pupils are concerned, I enjoy my teaching and am happy with the results. Low as far as my relations with the department and its development are concerned.

An Established Assistant teacher in faculty D described his job satisfaction as:

good, taking into account the problem in the faculty. I enjoy what I am doing and get a lot out of it. It would be improved if the problem of the faculty could be resolved.

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Access to the head seemed to affect job satisfaction. One member of the Established Assistant Staff said his job satisfaction was:

very high this year because there is a better consultation procedure direct with the head. As I have found the head approachable, I have approached him again. I think a lot of people don't do that.

One of the Junior Assistant Staff suggested his job satisfaction would improve if someone said:

"We're with you, we believe in you and what you are trying to do."

The questionnaire in 1984 recorded a change in the staff's job satisfaction. It seemed to be much more clearly the case that the more senior you were, the better your job satisfaction. One quite senior member of staff was a notable exception. He described his satisfaction as low, and gave a lot of negative responses in the rest of the survey.

Inevitably, the dispute affected all staff's job satisfaction, sometimes in unexpected ways. In the 1985 interviews, some staff said the dispute had improved their job satisfaction, because they were able to devote more time to teaching, as meetings were cancelled.

The senior staff all had a high level of job satisfaction despite the frustrations. They enjoyed their jobs, dealing with problems, sorting out crises, because:

there's always something different, and I enjoy having to find a solution.

The main concern expressed was the need to develop a greater sense of identity amongst the senior team.

Middle managers described their job satisfaction as very high, valuing the working relationships with children and colleagues who were also seen as friends.

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The Established Assistant Staff tended to feel that the dispute coloured all their work. Despite finding teaching very satisfying and valuing their relationship with the children, many felt disillusioned with the system rather than the school. Despite these concerns, they also reported job satisfaction derived from a lesson that went really well.

The Junior Assistant Staff felt strongly about the wider political context and saw their job as:
tainted with the pressure of work and the constant stress of the job.

To them, the way the government had reacted was:

cheap and small-minded and undermines all teachers.

They were frustrated that there were no negotiations. To them, there was no settlement to the dispute in sight, and the government appeared determined to run down the state system. They felt:

trapped with no prospect of improving their salaries, and the school and conditions deteriorating.

They tended to blame the management of the school for some of their lack of satisfaction, feeling that the head had not supported the staff or tackled the LEA. They wanted more interest from the senior staff on general discipline in school, and saw them as becoming remote from the daily problems that faced assistant staff.

In summary

This section has looked at the variety of issues that affect morale in schools. These issues demonstrate that the management of morale is not in the hands of the head alone. If steps need to be taken to improve teacher morale, it would require a consistent commitment from the LEA and the government as well as appropriate action by the school's management.

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The head's alleged **inaccessibility** was seen by some staff as detracting from the school's core activity. Some of the criticism arose because the head was perceived to devote too much time to activities the staff regarded as peripheral. This is a matter of argument beyond the scope of this research. There was a great, even unrealistic expectation from the staff that the head could do both the administrative parts of his job, including the management of the external boundary, and be closely involved in all the aspects of the work of all staff all the time. This view of the "traditional" head surfaced again and again in the research, and illustrates a differentiated perception of the head's role. The problem was that it had not been recognised nor addressed. It is doubtful if the head could actually do all that the staff expected, even if he had no other commitments. As there was no alternative mechanism in place, the staff felt undervalued by the institution.

Staff have a clear view of the pro-active head's role. They expect the head to be in school and making staff management a significant feature of their work. By being seen to devote time to staff management issues, the head is perceived to value the staff and their contribution to the school's work. Good personal relationships and care for the welfare of individual members of **staff's welfare** and **professional development** are key features of the preferred management style.

Another theme discernible in this chapter is the fact that a teacher can turn to several different sources for **affirmation**, but these sources have different kinds of power. Thus while an assistant teacher gains affirmation from work with pupils in the classroom, this is insufficient on its own. Assistant teachers also look for affirmation from their team leaders, in both academic and pastoral work. All would welcome a personal interest being shown in their work by the senior management, particularly the head. This reflects Nias' (1989) findings that

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reference groups provide sources of affirmation for recently qualified staff, and form a key part in their development of a positive self-concept.

At the middle management level the sources of affirmation are different. Whilst the respect of more junior colleagues is important for confirming the success of leadership, confirmation is also sought from senior staff, including the headteacher, the group to whom middle managers are accountable.

Members of the senior team also made clear that they valued affirmation from the head that they were doing their work well.

Other parts of the data (Chapter 12) suggest that the faculty head was a critical factor in the development of staff morale. Two faculties had strong internal support, with all staff feeling that they were involved in the decision-making process and identifying strongly with the faculty's aims. Staff in these faculties seemed to experience higher levels of morale and job satisfaction than staff in faculties where the quality of middle management was less fully developed.

In the next chapter we see how the school was affected by the industrial action of 1984-6.

CHAPTER 14

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES AND INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Introduction

This chapter examines the increasing involvement of external groups in the school's affairs. It examines the effect of decisions taken by the LEA on the head's traditional freedom to manage the school. It goes on to consider how the industrial action affected the decision-making process, and the break down of formal consultation procedures. It then considers the reactions of staff to questions about morale, staff development and welfare, following up the work mentioned in the last chapter, in the context of the action. This chapter relies on observation of meetings and interview data.

In the period 1982-1984 school management could be said to be largely within the control of headteachers. From 1984 onwards, other groups became increasingly involved in schools. As the industrial strife developed, the head's freedom of action to manage the school as s/he wished became constrained by LEA and Government action, and union reaction. The effect of these factors on the head's ability to manage the school, and the staff's response forms the second part of this chapter.

Lyons, Stenning and McQueeney (1983) discuss the problems that increasing social and economic pressures caused schools. They suggest that the personal attitudes of the head had a great effect on the coping strategies heads adopted. The high degree of mutual accommodation and trust that used to characterise school management was proving more and more difficult to sustain. The balance of heads' daily tasks changed, with matters involving the external boundary taking an increasing amount of time at the expense of the internal organisation of the school.

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They found that heads who had strong senior management teams, and who enjoyed the respect of staff and had established good personal relationships were most effective in reducing the full impact of action on the school. In their view, external pressures reduced the head's autonomy and eroded their traditional freedom of action. Very few heads appeared to understand the changing employment relations climate and adopt appropriate strategies to cope with the pressures confronting the school. The heads who accepted responsibility for helping staff understand the issues and problems raised by changed circumstances appeared to have fewer problems with their staff. Heads consistently and unequivocally expressed the belief that their autonomy and authority were being eroded.

Pietrasik (1987) argues that the dispute led to bitter differences between staff groups in schools. Heads felt that they had to keep the schools running as normally as possible, but in trying to do this often strayed into the area of undermining the teachers' action. Teachers felt that they were expected to still give a high level of professional commitment without either financial reward or consultation about policy.

Hellawell (1990) found that the dispute led to the polarisation of staff and the development of "us" and "them" attitudes. Heads were seen, increasingly, as management figures by their staffs rather than as fellow members of the teaching team. Heads interviewed clearly felt that the staff had rejected their traditional management style as a result of the dispute.

Ball (1987) suggests that the dispute shattered the traditional consensus and led to antagonism, both between "Management" and "Staff" and between groups of staff, reflecting micro-political divisions and different union membership. Ball argues that the dispute was a result of

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the government's determination to reassert control over teachers' work. Teachers' reactions stemmed from uncertainty over the way changes in their work were being managed.

The literature about the industrial dispute suggests that the government was pursuing a political agenda. It was trying to bring about changes that it thought were necessary in the operation of education. One way of making education more accountable to the needs of society was by relating it to the world of work and vocational education through a series of initiatives like TVEI. Part of the method of bringing about reform involved challenging the traditional position of schools and headteachers.

LEAs, faced with cuts in expenditure and the prospects of falling rolls, found that the traditional laissez-faire methods of control were called into question, but did not have effective plans to solve the developing problems. The consequence for schools, and Hillside in particular, was increasing involvement by the LEA in matters that had previously been seen as the headteacher's preserve.

Headteachers found themselves uncertain how to respond. The old certainties were under attack and the new "manager" ethos still relatively un-developed. The link with the LEA was still ambiguous, as the government attacks on local authorities had not commenced. The situation was difficult enough for established heads. For a recently appointed head committed to trying to change the ethos of the school, with all the uncertainties that involves, the situation was fraught with difficulty.

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Pay and Conditions

In the early 1980's teachers in schools began to become aware that education was coming to the forefront of the political agenda at local and national level. There were cuts in LEA spending that affected Hillside and other schools in the LEA.

On the level of physical well-being, many teachers reported a deterioration in their physical surroundings. The LEA changed the cleaning arrangements for schools, and a firm of contracted cleaners took over from the in-house cleaners previously employed as direct labour. Cleaning specifications were also altered at this time, and the frequency of cleaning classrooms reduced. Staff felt that cleaning became a major issue, and described it as affecting their morale.

The issue was raised at the staff meeting on 6 December 1984. The head discussed problems with cleaning and the problem of falling rolls in the area, though Hillside appeared to be unaffected for the time being.

The lack of resources for redecoration had meant that classrooms had become dingy and presented a neglected appearance, and this was perceived as having an effect upon the children's performance. From the point of view of the teacher, this lack of provision of adequate surroundings presented an unfortunate choice. One way of looking at the issue was to see the lack of resources as a further indication that society did not value education and was not prepared to put money into the service. Teachers who accepted this view accepted a challenge to their self image. The alternative approach was for teachers to adopt self-help schemes to improve their surroundings. In this case teachers, often with the help of parents

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and pupils, worked in the evenings and at weekends to decorate their classrooms. This might have a detrimental effect on the teacher's image of himself as a professional.

One member of the Established Assistant Staff said:

The school is filthy. It's partly made worse by the action, partly because the cleaning staff have been cut. We should not have to accept lower standards. No one wants to know about cleaning problems. I scrubbed my room from top to bottom last year during the NUT strikes. It was filthy and disgusting. I wished I had taken photos and sent them to the LEA and the papers and asked if they would work in such condition...We either have to accept the dirt or clean up ourselves. That's not really right.

Beside cleanliness, it mattered to staff that the classroom was well heated and provided with appropriate furniture. The school had several mobile classrooms some distance from the main building. One Junior Assistant member of staff commented on the difficulties he faced teaching in an inappropriate room without the facilities he regarded as essential for effective teaching.

They put me in a classroom without enough room for desks for everyone. When I complained, I felt I didn't get anywhere. I felt I was being told to shut up.

A fourth factor in the area of physical well-being reflected the anxiety of some staff over pay levels. Some of the Junior Assistant Staff on scale one and with three or four years teaching experience had young families. They found that they could only make ends meet by taking second jobs. One admitted that this had an effect on his performance in school and felt that the economic necessity of providing for a young family over-rode his concern to do the best professional job possible. Another commented that:

my morale would be improved by better pay, so that I can buy my own house.

Several staff commented on relative pay levels. During the research advertisements appeared in the local paper for trainee fire-fighters aged 18-21 at pay levels above the starting salary for teachers. An advertisement appeared in the NAS/UWT journal that contrasted the pay offered

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to a street sweeper with that offered to a scale one teacher. It was not surprising that some staff were thinking seriously about the financial implications of remaining in teaching. This is not the place to get involved in a discussion over teachers' pay levels but at the simple level of working hours and reward pay was perceived to contribute to morale. One Junior Assistant member of staff said:

I would like to be financially rewarded. I don't want a great wage; I just want a decent wage, and I don't think for my age and my experience in comparison to what other people are getting, I am getting anywhere near a decent wage.

Resources

Another factor that staff regarded as important was the provision of resources. This fell into two categories, materials and time. Many staff referred to problems of shortages of materials that had developed as the amount of capitation had failed to keep pace with the rate of price increase of text books, materials and stationery. In subjects like woodwork the cost of the materials used in the practical examination for CSE used to be met by the local authority. After a change in funding policy, this cost had to be met from within the faculty's allowance. Maintenance of machinery in practical subjects and scientific equipment used to be funded separately but now had to be paid from faculty funds. The greatest difficulty arose in January 1984, when pressure on LEA spending led to the school's budget being frozen for the rest of the financial year. To offset the spiralling costs of resources, the school made increasing use of worksheets that were reproduced using Banda machines or the photocopier. This required use of non-teaching time to prepare and produce teaching materials that used to be more readily available in book form. One Established Assistant teacher summed up the position when he said:

There are a number of staff prepared to take strike action who would not have been prepared to do so five years ago. It's unfortunate that it has become linked with pay. There has been no talk about the physical conditions and resources. I think there is a great dissatisfaction about the resources being put into education, and pay is just the last straw. When you are frustrated by insufficient money for text books and other

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resources; when the physical condition of the building is neglected and has an obvious sense of decay; the problem with the cleaning; all these things have led to a sense of frustration and affected staff morale, which I don't think are related directly to the organisation of the school.

There were also difficulties over changes in working practice. The usual arrangements for supply teachers to cover lessons for absent colleagues were changed in January 1984. At a difficult staff meeting on 4 February 1984 David Thomas explained the restrictions on supply cover and other cuts in spending. Staff were angry that the LEA was changing their working practices and asked the head to write to parents protesting about the cuts and describing their effects on the education of the children. The head refused to write a letter that publicly criticised the LEA, as the staff wished, and the meeting became rather bitter and personal. The staff interpreted the head's refusal to write this letter as a sign that he did not sympathise with the justice of their case. They regarded it as the head siding with the LEA against the staff.

In the event he did write to parents explaining that the cuts had hit Hillside particularly hard, as money reserved for supplies in February and March had been clawed back. This meant that the school would be unable to order new text books, furniture and stationery. He asked for help from parents who worked for companies involved in the manufacture or use of paper, or wood. He also asked parents to volunteer to assist with school trips. Supply teachers would no longer be available to release teachers to accompany these trips. If parents were unable to assist, trips would have to be cancelled. He concluded by saying that Hillside was facing a rather difficult time, but the staff were all trying to protect the students from the worst effects of the cuts. Staff did not regard this as the strong support they were hoping for. They had wanted the head to be much more publicly critical of the LEA.

The staff meeting of 5 July 1984 included the news that staffing would be cut for the following year as a result of falling rolls.

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The staff meeting of 4 October 1984 included a discussion about cover, in the wake of the restrictions on supply teachers. The staff, and their professional associations were beginning to express concern over the new arrangements for cover. One professional association was refusing to cover lessons for an absent teacher if the absence was known in advance. Other associations did not impose this restriction, so it became possible to use these staff to cover lessons that more militant teachers would refuse. Teachers were unwilling to be taken advantage of, and there was concern to see that cover was shared equally amongst the staff, rather than fall unreasonably on the less militant. This issue of solidarity was to divide the staff when the programme of rolling disruption began in December 1984. One member of staff, reviewing the action in 1986, said:

I expect the head to be the leader of our team, not side with the politicians. You can't sit on the fence like the head has tried to do. He's perceived as not supporting the staff, and he appears to have done all he can to minimise the effect of the industrial action.

Social Attitudes

The attitude of society to teachers affects their morale. Staff felt that the low levels of pay and an increasing demand for accountability reflected a critical view of the teacher by society. The perception that the Secretary of State for Education, Sir Keith Joseph, appeared to speak frequently and scathingly of a desperate need for appraisal as a means of weeding out the (assumed) large numbers of incompetent staff made the situation worse. The general view appeared to be that the public undervalued the teaching profession and underestimated the difficulty of the job. One Established Assistant member of staff described the situation, saying that:

the climate in education is very depressing, from problems with cleaning to lack of support from parents.

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The staff's perception was that they were expected to make up the deficiencies in financial provision by devoting more time to their preparation, but without either recognition or reward. The alternative was to return to chalk and talk teaching methods that staff felt to be undesirable. Staff were not prepared to compromise their professional standards because of inadequate funding and therefore the burden of extra work fell upon their shoulders, increasing their workload and affecting their morale. One Established Assistant member of staff summed up the situation, saying that:

the school has been cold. That has been rectified after a lot of protest. Secondly, it's dirty, filthy. Thirdly, there's the underfunding for books and equipment. Everywhere you look, it's demoralising.

Decision-Making

There had been a ban on meetings during the late spring and summer term of 1983, over the pay claim for that year, but the situation had been resolved relatively quickly. The teacher action began in earnest in December 1984. It consisted of a series of walk-outs by selected staff for particular lessons, with the intention of causing the maximum disruption for the minimum cost. In some schools, all children who would be affected by this action were told to stay at home for the whole day, as no other staff would be available to look after them. At Hillside, senior staff looked after the children affected in the school hall, thus, in the assistant teachers' eyes, undermining the action. Schools that took this view were increasingly targeted by the teacher unions.

Another element of the action was a refusal by teachers to carry out any activities apart from their normal scheduled teaching. They would not cover for absent colleagues or attend meetings after school. They were advised to undertake no duties at breaks and lunch times and

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leave the school premises. This particularly affected the role of year heads who spent most of their breaks and lunch times on pastoral care work.

A third element of the dispute was a ban on meetings. This brought about a significant change in Hillside's decision-making processes. The head was beginning to experience some success in developing democratic processes, and staff involvement. The whole staff had been involved in two meetings about TVEI in December 1982. They had been invited to join the discussion about reports in March 1983, and decisions about options and assessments in the autumn of 1983. Heads of faculty had persuaded the head to review the operation of the detention system in the autumn of 1983. At the beginning of 1984 the faculty heads began discussion of the implementation of the Bullock report on Language across the Curriculum. Now the number of meetings held was cut dramatically. There were no formal meetings, though some informal discussions did take place.

The senior management explained that the ban on meetings meant that:

consultation works in an informal way now, rather than through formal channels. This means communication tends to be written, when sometimes discussion would be better.

The consequence was:

no major decisions are taken. Routine issues like uniform are dealt with by senior staff.

Senior staff thought the lack of consultation led to the staff perception that the head was remote, because he was not seen at meetings. They were quite sure that staff could have access directly to the head, but thought assistant staff tended to influence the head only through their faculty heads. They saw their own role as:

trying to interpret staff feeling to the head.

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Middle managers thought the school had continued to run well during the dispute. Several said that there had been far too many meetings in the past, with too much time devoted to routine trivial matters like uniform and bags instead of getting down to the important things. They thought that:

if the meetings are less frequent they might be more meaningful.

Junior Assistant Staff felt that the loss of staff meetings had deprived them of their main opportunity to influence school policy. One said:

I didn't like the atmosphere at staff meetings, but at least there was an exchange of views.

Another agreed:

Staff meetings were a chance for people to air their views.

Another consequence of the action was that faculty heads now seemed to take more autonomous decisions. One faculty head described how he informed the head of faculty decisions by sending him a copy of every memo he sent out to the faculty. He did not think this was a new development, however, and couldn't:

think of an occasion when I have consulted the head, except perhaps when I first arrived. The head has never complained about any decision I have made.

Assistant staff were less involved in decision-making. Middle managers thought that assistant staff were now less able to influence the school's policy, though they were still able to affect department policy. The middle managers believed that the head was in favour of consultation, a view summed up by one faculty head who said

I think our head is a democratic head who will give everyone a chance to air their views. Other heads in my experience are not like that.

The divisions between the assistant staff affected their view of the decision-making process. The Established Assistant Staff agreed that the action had prevented formal discussion, and

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thought that policy was decided by the senior staff because there were no meetings. They thought that the senior staff preferred fuller consultation. Some consultation took place very quietly and unofficially. Direct methods of contact were replaced by one to one conversations.

They said:

the head will listen if he is approached in a positive way, but doesn't respond well to an ultimatum.

They shared the view that before the industrial action there had been too many meetings that did not really get anywhere. They thought some meetings were necessary to formulate policy and encourage everyone to work together. They thought that there was still some interaction between the head and the faculty heads, though in an informal way, saying that:

faculty heads keep in touch with their faculties in a similar informal way, through casual conversation in corridors.

They thought that the loss of staff meetings had a detrimental effect on the school. Although the decisions were still made at the top, the meetings were:

an opportunity for an exchange of views and for the head to gather the opinion of the staff.

The Junior Assistant Staff did not think there had been any real change. They argued that the consultation machinery did not work well now, but neither had it worked well when there had been staff meetings. They argued that within the consultative machinery, year heads and faculty heads were able to influence policy more and their opinions carried more weight. They did not think that:

the assistant teacher's views have ever really been taken into account, which means that the ordinary teacher does not feel he has had his say.

They felt that this might be more to do with the faculty heads discussing things with their faculties and taking those views back to the senior meetings. They emphasised that they were describing their experience within their own faculties (Chapter 12).

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One of the group took a more political view, and thought that he was not consulted about school policy, either before the action or since it started. He did not think staff influenced school policy, though not as a result of a deliberate decision by the head. In his view the head was:

part of an authoritarian and traditional structure that was common in schools, and with which the head felt comfortable.

He suggested that the system was not so much bad as inadequate, arguing that schools:

should be democratic and staff views nurtured and encouraged.

The lack of meetings caused some colleagues to feel that communication in the school was breaking down. Changes in school's policy were usually published in a document, or a notice on the staff board, or filtered out by word of mouth.

In the summer term of 1986 the head wanted to make a significant change to the school timetable for the following year, to prepare for the introduction of GCSE. He wanted to change the number of lessons taught, the length of each lesson, and the allocation of time to different subjects within the timetable. He also proposed reducing tutorial time in the morning from half an hour to a five minute registration. This would have a significant effect on the role of year heads. These developments represented a major change in the way the school operated and would have implications for every teacher.

Initially, the head tried to arrange to meet faculty heads, by arranging for senior staff to cover their lessons during the day. The faculty heads followed their unions' advice and refused to agree to an alteration to their normal schedule. They knew that senior staff were planning developments, but there was little opportunity for consultation. They were sure that:

the head wants to involve us in decision-making, but is unable to do so. He has not been able to have meetings because of the dispute. When he tried to arrange meetings the middle managers were not prepared to meet him half way.

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The head then published his proposals in a document that became known as the Pink Paper (Appendix 4), and invited all staff to make a written response.

The Pink Paper met with a mixed response. Senior staff were concerned that:

the staff might not realise all the implications of the paper.

The faculty heads had a sympathetic understanding of the head's dilemma. They said that:

since the action began, decisions are made by the senior management and then issued, usually in writing.

The Established Assistant Staff thought the Pink Paper was designed to explain the head's ideas to the staff and invite them to respond. They viewed it as a consultation document and thought that the head was:

trying to get a staff view before making a decision.

However, the Junior Assistant Staff did not see it as a consultation document. One suggested:

The pink sheet caused a lot of anguish, and the staff became very heated. They don't see it as a consultation document; they think it will be pushed through without discussion.

Effects on Morale

The senior staff did not think the head could do anything to improve morale. The unions were disagreeing with one another, and with the way the head was managing the dispute:

some staff are taking party political stances. Some staff are not talking to one another, because of the action.

They thought that the Head was caught in a vice between the LEA and the government, and felt threatened by all the antagonism. The morale of staff was better in those faculties where the faculty heads had been talking to their teams. They thought that morale was poor because of the industrial action, and that this was not directly within the head's control, though they all commented on the need for the head:

to be seen about the school, talking to staff and offering them praise.

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The loss of staff meetings meant that:

we can not explain decisions to staff and it is leading to friction and antagonism between the head and the staff...Staff meetings allow people to let off steam.

There was general agreement that morale in the staff room was low, and the industrial action was very depressing, stifling any initiatives. They were concerned that it might have a lasting effect on morale.

Middle managers identified a sense of frustration amongst staff about the government's attitude to teachers. The fact that the unions were disagreeing with one another affected morale badly. There was disagreement about the best way for the head to handle the dispute. Some staff expressed impatience with colleagues taking action, whilst other staff thought the head should have been more supportive.

The middle managers thought the head had tried to keep all the staff together, trying not to be provocative and smooth things out. There had been great dissatisfaction about the resources being put into education before the action started. Staff were frustrated by insufficient money for text books and other resources; the neglected physical condition of the buildings and the obvious sense of decay; the problem with cleaning. All these things had led to a sense of frustration and affected morale, which was not directly related to the organisation of the school or to what other colleagues are doing. The middle managers' view was summed up by the faculty head who said:

I don't think that the morale is bad because of anything that the head has done.

The actions of the head in trying to operate the school within LEA guide-lines was a focus of disagreement amongst assistant staff. There were clear divisions between the two groups of staff in their answers to almost all questions about the dispute.

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The Established Assistant Staff tended to be more sympathetic to the head and the problems of managing the school. They did not see that the Head could have managed things differently, and did not think morale was bad because of anything he had done. They thought he probably:

has a thankless job dealing with crises.

They said that, in one sense:

the management of the staff has been taken out of his hands,

This view was shared by a more militant teacher who could see that:

the divisions within the staff have made the head's position extremely difficult.

Another commented that the problems were:

mainly the system, rather than the school.

The Junior Assistant Staff felt that the school's management had failed to see the sense of injustice that to them pervaded the industrial action, and the head should have done more to support them. They perceived the head as not identifying with the staff. They felt strongly that the school did not value them because it did not support the action more positively. They spoke of feelings of bitterness arising from the action that would take a long time to heal and described the school as:

polarised between the senior staff and the rest of the staff who felt alienated and trapped by low wages.

One described morale as:

Devastated. The main contributory factor is the industrial dispute. There's a difference between the attitudes of the different unions, and that has caused some disagreement. The staff is divided over the action. There are people I despise over their lack of support, and I don't want to talk to them. That probably makes things difficult for the head.

Another reflected Ball's (1988) view about the essential change in the nature of relationships in school. He summed up the difficulties, as he saw them, suggesting:

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teachers want to all be members of one team, but now the staff is divided into bosses and workers.

One member of the Junior Assistant Staff suggested:

I am a great believer in team management. I think the spirit of the staff as a team has broken down, both within the whole staff and also within the senior team itself. A number of staff seem to have reached the position where they no longer care. The industrial action is part of it, but I don't think it's all down to that. So many of the staff are true professionals and I think that though Keith Joseph might have done some damage, the staff would still continue (to be well motivated) if there had been a strong leader pulling them along.

Staff also became concerned about the damage the staff's action was doing to the school's good reputation. Senior staff commented that:

parents will see that other schools have less trouble and send their children there.

However, the responsibility for this problem was not seen as the head's alone. Staff, LEA and government were all seen to have had some influence on the perceived decline in the school's image.

The settlement of the dispute did little to improve the situation, with staff saying that morale had not improved and there was a lot of hostility to the agreement. There was a feeling that:

the government wants teachers to give a lot and get little in return.

The industrial action had a highly detrimental effect on the positive aspects of staff morale. Before the industrial action, the staff at Hillside had a very friendly social relationship. Informal parties in the evening at the end of term were regular occurrences, with members of staff taking considerable trouble to provide food and refreshments. At Christmas 1982 there had been mince pies and other treats provided for the staff. The following year staff had also organised a cabaret for themselves and the students. This voluntary expenditure of time by colleagues made a major contribution to reinforcing personal and professional values and

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therefore contributed to morale. There was a feeling, on the part of some staff at least, that a members of staff could come into the staff room at lunch time and talk over their troubles with colleagues who were also friends (Nias et al.1989).

The onset of industrial action changed the social relationships significantly. The unions, at national and local level, were in strong disagreement with each other about the conduct of the dispute. Hostility between different associations surfaced in the staffroom, leading at one point to members of one association talking of boycotting the end of term social function at Christmas 1985. They organised their own social event and refused to attend the usual staff function. Several staff interviewed during the autumn term of 1985 and the spring term of 1986 spoke of the effect that the industrial dispute had had on relationships between staff. Members of some professional association regularly left the premises at lunch time, and the social cohesion of the staff room was lost. Instead of being a place of rest and relaxation offering personal and professional support, it became a scene for public rows and inter-union acrimony. Some colleagues spoke openly of the way they despised other teachers for their stance on the industrial dispute. One Established Assistant member of staff described the situation as:

terrible, with the staff fractured into various political groups as a result of the action

The effect of this change on morale was devastating. The staff, who clearly felt less than valued by outsiders, were not able to obtain mutual support from professional colleagues, and morale was very badly affected. The breakdown of personal relationships that arose as a result of inter-union quarrelling could be seen as outside the sphere of influence of the management structure. In retrospect, it is difficult to see how any team leader with a responsibility to

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manage the school/local authority/parents boundary could prevent that happening without experiencing an element of conflict in the exercise of the boundary role.

In summary

The importance of a warm, clean and suitably equipped teaching environment is clearly described, and the failure to provide adequate facilities and resources affected morale adversely during this research.

Physical conditions were not the only factor to affect morale. The need for adequate social recognition of the teachers' job was also important, and government statements that appeared to undermine the professionalism of teachers were greatly resented.

The head's position was very difficult, with one group of staff, the Junior Assistant Staff, outspokenly critical of his neutral posture in the dispute. These staff clearly wanted the head to identify with the dispute, and oppose the LEA's position of minimising the effects on the children. Others, with easier access to him, commented on the difficulties he faced and his attempts to continue to involve staff in the decision-making and policy development of the school. The chapter again demonstrates that teachers seem to have unreasonable, and sometimes contradictory expectations of the head as leader.

The overwhelming feeling that came through the interviews was of disillusion with the government and the LEA. All aspects of the school's life were affected. In Nias' (1989) terms, teachers' self concepts were under threat because society appeared to be devaluing the role of teachers at the same time as industrial action split the profession. Thus the teachers' self-concept was under a dual attack: from their external reference groups in society, and from the

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lack of support from internal reference groups in school. What was clear was that the influence of external events in the extreme form of the dispute had an enormous effect on the staff of the school, depressing morale and opening up wounds between colleagues that would take a long time to heal. The problems with the end of term Christmas celebrations that resulted from inter-union hostility sticks in my mind as the clearest indicator of how difficult things had become in this normally friendly staff.

CHAPTER 15

HILLSIDE SCHOOL: AN INTERPRETATIVE SYNTHESIS

Introduction

This research has addressed a number of questions that deal with the relationship between power, leadership, management and morale in schools. It has explored the effect of a change of head and management style on staff attitudes, and the results of a period of professional dispute on the morale of the teachers. It suggests that changes in management style can reflect changes in the power structures in school, which have a significant effect on the morale of staff, whether they are the gainers or losers in the power change. The research also suggests that the way people are managed and supported in their work is more important than management structures. The management of staff has to be actively planned for, not only by the senior management team of a school, but by all staff who have a responsibility to help and support other, more junior, members of staff. What happens within the structures, the reality of the interpersonal relationships, is the key factor that determines the way the school operates (Paechter & Head 1996).

In this chapter I rest on my findings in chapters 6 to 14 in order to discuss the main issues covered by my research within the context of power, leadership, management and morale and the way that they affected Hillside school.

Aims & Objectives

The value of having stated Aims and Objectives is that they can help create a vision and shared sense of purpose in an organisation. The aims of Hillside School were in place at the beginning of this research, and staff at middle management and above agreed that they had

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been involved in writing them. Some assistant staff also identified with the aims of the school, but others suggested that the aims were an irrelevant paper exercise that made little difference to their working lives, or to the running of the school. The head's vision was implicit and shown by example, but not made explicit and communicated to all staff at all levels. Thus the aims were not fully internalised by the staff or reflected in the structures of the school. They did not provide a sense of vision and direction that was acted upon by the staff as a whole. Staff did not see the aims and objectives as having any practical value. They regarded them as bland and meaningless except in the most general terms, and so the aims did not contribute to the development of a shared vision. In Ofsted's (1994) terms, they did not have a long-term view of where the school was heading. This meant that there was no explicit sharing of values and norms about learning, behaviour and relationships.

David Thomas had not been able to develop that sense of shared direction at Hillside before the onset of the teacher action. In my judgement, it is probable that the lack of cohesion and sense of purpose is one reason why the period of teacher action led to so much bitterness at Hillside.

Other work by Lyons et al. (1983), and Bolam et. al. (1993) identifies the development of a common purpose and sense of shared values and commitment as a key factor in a school's ability to cope with the industrial action of the early eighties. This view is supported by French (1988) who found the action had little effect on one school in his study. The school he studied had long-established traditions and high standards that put the school and its pupils before teachers and unions.

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Management and change at Hillside

In this section I propose to examine the way change affects schools. There are three elements to change to be considered at Hillside. Firstly, there are macro-level changes that affected the whole school and are the result of government action. Secondly, there are changes that are the inevitable consequence of the appointment of a new head to a school. Thirdly, there are the consequences of these changes on groups and individual members of staff who may be seen to be the losers or winners in terms of personal power and status that is a consequence of change.

Change affects morale at a number of levels within an organisation. At the macro-level it affects the organisation as a whole, and the willingness of staff to help implement change or to resist it. At the level of operational teams, morale is also significant in facilitating or obstructing change (Faculty D). At the individual level, the micro-political level, change and its consequences are significant in their effect on the individual staff member's concept of self.

(i) Whole school changes that result from government action

In this section, I use the findings of my research to analyse the effects of change at the macro-level on Hillside school.

The first element of macro-level change is the way headship is changing as schools become more complex. The delegation of financial management and the increasing involvement of governors has increased the complexity of relationships for the head. Other areas of management are also outside his/her control, with aspects of policy decided or influenced

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by government and LEA. This process, which was beginning in 1982 when the research started, has gathered speed in the following decade, and some would argue has led to a transformation of the leadership of schools.

Government initiatives and the change in the nature of headship have implications for the rest of the teaching staff. This change in the nature of headship, brought about by the exertion of pressure by outside agencies and the demands for new types of accountability, may have transformed the role of the head. The view of more junior staff, and their expectations of appropriate headteacher behaviour have not changed at the same speed.

Changes in the nature of headship appear to mean that there is an increasing need for the head to concentrate on the management of the external boundary. Consequently, the head is unable to devote the same amount of time to managing the personnel issues within the school, though staff still perceive this as a key part of the head's role. However, the choice of management style lies with the head. The enforced changes in the role of the head were not fully appreciated by the staff at Hillside, especially the Junior Assistant Staff. They continued to expect the head to fulfil the traditional role. Even staff at middle and senior management experienced dissonance over this role change. They realised that the head could not possibly do all that was expected of him, and yet at the same time wished that he did. They were unsure whether the change was the result of a conscious or unconscious process, and their view implied that such changes did not produce the best way for a school to be managed.

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One consequence of the change in the role of the head is that significant areas of management have to be devolved to other members of the senior team, and to middle management. The head needs to ensure that devolved tasks are performed by other key members of staff so that the creative energy of the staff can be harnessed to pursue common goals. The head also needs to create practical support structures that will help senior and middle managers show other staff how to achieve the agreed goals of the school. In this respect, the head has a role in teaching the senior and middle managers how to manage and motivate their teams, and how to get the best out of their staff by their ability to lead.

There is, therefore, a potential for conflict between heads and staff that results from different definitions and expectations of the headteacher's role. This differentiated perception is likely to impact on staff morale. One manifestation of the conflict is seen in the context of staff morale being affected by changes in attitudes as career patterns develop (Cf. Blackburn's (1985) diagram Chapter 5, p73). Another is the importance of critical incidents that affect morale (French 1988). It may be that the pressure on heads makes it easy for them to take an authoritarian stance, as this may accord with the traditional view of headship. Whilst they may feel comfortable with this role, it may lead to the further proletarianisation of teachers.

Other writers have commented on the effect of government intervention in education. Marris (1975) suggests that central government's attempts to impose change are often unsuccessful, and that attempts to pre-empt conflict, argument and protest by national planning are likely to be abortive.

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The staff at Hillside concurred with Marris' view that:

When those who have power to manipulate changes act as if they have only to explain, and when their explanations are not accepted at once shrug off opposition as ignorance or prejudice, they express a profound contempt for the meaning of lives other than their own. (p166)

He argues that however reasonable the proposed changes, the process of implementing them must still allow the impulse of rejection to play itself out. This is at the heart of the teacher disillusion with the government's handling of the teachers' dispute observed at Hillside. Ball (1988) asserts that government intervention in the 1980s led to the proletarianisation of teachers, with heads thrust by government into a more managerial role. Fullan (1991) argues that the local and national context and parental involvement are important elements in school change, which cannot be seen simply in terms of the teachers.

There is some disagreement about the way headteachers reconcile and respond to these changes of policy through their own choices of leadership and management style. Evetts (1994) argues that the occupational culture of headship has changed fundamentally in respect of the day to day work activities and work relationships. The consequence of this change is that a new type of headteacher is required. In her view, the role of the head as educational leader has diminished as other aspects of the new headteachers' role have developed. Similarly, McHugh & McMullan (1995) argue that the Educational Reform Act has transformed the fabric of the headteacher's job, so that s/he is now expected to fulfil the role of manager rather than master teacher. Gronn (1996) does not appear to share this view. He argues that the current concentration on organisational performance and outcomes creates the impression of newness and difference when in fact there has been no big breakthrough.

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Whatever management style is selected, teachers have a clear set of expectations of headteachers, described by Nias (1980), Bolam et al (1993) and Lyons et al. (1983). They found that team management and approachability combined with leadership skills were the key to managing staff successfully.

Heads are still expected to be able to provide leadership and vision, and manage staff positively. Ofsted (1994) suggest that heads should give positive leadership and a clear direction to the school's work. They argue that successful heads encourage staff to play an active part in the development and running of the school and value their contribution.

Ofsted expect roles and responsibilities to be clearly defined and there to be appropriate delegation, with communication routes within the school that operate effectively and an accessible and approachable head and senior staff. Lyons et al. (1983) and Bolam et. al (1993) found that the heads who dealt most successfully with the disruptive action of the early eighties were those who refused to adopt the LEA/government view and were seen to be supportive of their staff in their action.

(ii) Changes that are the result of a change of headteacher

When David Thomas was appointed in 1980, two years before this research began, he succeeded a well-established and dominant head. He wished to develop a different, more open management style than that of his predecessor, involving middle management more fully in all aspects of the decision-making process. He wanted to change not so much the structures in the school as the climate, or culture (Chapter 6, p90). In all these respects David Thomas reflected the problems faced by new heads described by Weindling & Earley

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(1987). The senior staff team, and middle managers had to become accustomed to a different role. This new role was still evolving when the industrial action started in 1984. Participation was still not established as the school management style, nor seen to be a mechanism for handling all the changes the head was trying to make. These changes had implications for the relative power and status of staff at senior and middle management levels in the school and had a significant effect on their morale.

The senior team was in a state of change for much of the period of this research. It did not appear to have confidence in itself, and therefore did not engender confidence in other staff, particularly at a more junior level. The senior team needed a clearer sense of identity and shared vision if it was to exercise leadership within the management structure. Towards the end of this research there were signs that the senior management began to achieve just such a sense of identity, though the effects of industrial action prevented the development of unity in the fullest sense.

My judgement is that if the senior management team at Hillside had had greater coherence, they would have been able to work more positively with middle managers and been better able to support them. If they had felt strong and together as a team, and had identified with a clear vision for the school, and its aims, and they had been perceived by staff as making an important contribution, they would have been able to withstand the pressures of the action much better than they did.

In my analysis, middle managers in large secondary schools can be seen as mini-heads with authority and responsibility for up to a dozen teachers. They have to ensure that tasks are

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completed and that staff have a positive experience of their working relationships that encourage them in personal growth. This view is in line with that of Marland (1971) and Blackburn (1983). To fulfil their leadership role, middle managers need to share a sense of vision of the school and be able to communicate it effectively to their staff team, so that they shape the direction of their work. At Hillside, because the vision was implicit rather than explicit, it could be interpreted differently by different middle managers. David Thomas acted on the assumption that senior staff and middle managers had leadership roles to fulfil, and that leadership needed to be a shared responsibility. Middle managers were given greater autonomy, and therefore greater freedom to manage their areas of responsibility. Delegation provided an opportunity for staff development that was welcomed by staff at Hillside at all levels. Faculty heads were pleased to have significant responsibility delegated to them, and junior staff said that they would welcome the opportunity to show that they were ready for more responsibility.

However, the head's "hands off" management style gave freedom without direction to middle managers. It did not provide an example that could be pursued and understood, or that was mindful of the needs of the assistant staff. The novice middle managers were less skilled at delegation and team management than experienced managers, and needed to learn new skills. Middle managers needed to learn a new way of managing their staff teams, by involving them in decision-making. Bullock, James and Jamieson (1995) found that delegation was a significant issue and an important element in the difference between novice and expert educational managers, as shown in the diagram below.

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Aspects of Educational Management Practice			
	Decision-Making	Delegation	Interpersonal Skills
Established in post	Reflective and considered approach; take time if needed; understand the complexity of the system, but have identified the priorities.	Clear strategies for delegation; have identified tasks for delegation; will transfer authority.	If necessary will face up to and learn from conflict.
New to post	Challenged by the need to display expertise without situational knowledge; have identified a priority task to establish themselves in the school.	Want to lead from the front; uneasy about delegation; may not want to overburden colleagues.	Aware of importance of communication and good relationships; want to avoid conflict and 'settle in'.
New to management	Have little authority; decisions don't tend to impact on others.	Want to be delegated to; but need power as well as task.	Fear of conflict; a typical strategy is to be friendly.

This diagram illustrates the uncertainties of staff new to management. Inexperience amongst Hillside’s middle management contributed to the morale difficulties experienced in Faculty D.

Heads of faculty and year who developed successful management skills and involved staff in the decision-making process made them feel that they were able to influence their own working lives and won the whole hearted support of their colleagues. Where the faculty head or year head had developed good interpersonal skills and collaborative management, and was perceived to be actively involved and concerned in all the work of their colleagues, staff responses were positive, the team identity was strong and there was a feeling of personal and professional satisfaction. James (1993) describes this kind of interaction. When this was supported by clear channels of communication through the middle manager to the senior management, assistant staff had a more positive identification with the overall policy of the school (Caldwell and Spinks 1988) .

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Middle managers who were perceived to be poor administrators or remote, were likely to be criticised by staff and the work of the team suffered. Where middle managers failed to provide leadership, their level of support was considerably reduced, and junior staff commented critically on their leadership qualities. The perceived effects of middle managers on their teams at Hillside has been discussed in detail in Chapter 12.

The different perceptions of assistant staff suggest that the policy of giving middle management increased autonomy was not always successful, and a greater accountability to the senior management might have been beneficial.

(iii) The effects of change on the organisation

In this section, I explore the consequences of change on groups and individual members of staff, whether the change is the result of government or school initiatives.

My research shows that one consequence of the change in management style at Hillside was that decisions were reached more slowly, and that opportunities for dissent were increased. Staff had high expectations of David Thomas, and hoped he would change the culture of the school. On occasions their expectations were unrealistically high, and this led to inevitable disappointment. This was especially the case when David Thomas was perceived to be too lenient in disciplining students. Some staff saw this as weakness, and harked back favourably to the clear leadership that they had experienced under the previous head. They wanted David Thomas to make a stand on disciplinary issues and demonstrate his support for the staff. Most staff, however, thought that the change in style was good for the school, and welcomed it.

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Change at Hillside was very threatening to many assistant staff. They tended to focus on simple indicators (uniform; discipline; bags) as yardsticks of a successful school, while simultaneously recognising that the introduction of change would cause some discontinuities, again illustrating a dissonant response amongst staff. The ambivalence about change, and the conservative impulse manifested itself in staff at Hillside attempting to hold on to the mythical old certainties of John Robinson described in Chapter 6. The issue can be regarded as a barometer of anxiety, and the topic recurred regularly in the research.

One change at Hillside was that faculty heads were given significantly greater freedom to manage their areas of responsibility and became agents for change themselves. Heads of year, however, did not respond as positively to David Thomas' ideas, reflecting the middle management inertia described by Weindling and Earley (1987), and this led to estrangement and opposition.

The staff at Hillside saw two separate strands of management. The first strand consisted of the development of a vision of the purpose and direction for the organisation, and communicating this to the staff. This element of management merged into leadership behaviour, and embraced managing staff and maintaining morale: tasks that staff felt should be done by the head personally (Chapter 13, p205). The head was perceived by the staff to be the key figure providing leadership in the school, even though in practice many other staff at senior and middle management level had a great impact on the functioning of sections of the school and the morale and job satisfaction of the staff. Staff also expressed a desire for an active, positive involvement of the head in all aspects of the school's work.

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The staff at Hillside felt that it was important to have the quality of their work known and valued by the leadership of the school. The teachers I interviewed in this study reflected Nias' et. al. (1989) findings in a secondary school context.

The second element was in routine administrative tasks that were necessary to maintain the institution. The staff expressed concern over the efficiency of the school administration, with colleagues commenting critically on the lack of cohesion of the senior management team (Nias et. al. 1989). They suggested on more than one occasion that the left-hand did not appear to know what the right-hand was doing. Many staff spoke of their lack of confidence in a senior team that, at that time, did not appear to have confidence in itself (Chapter 8). Following the restructuring of the senior team in September 1984 and some team building exercises by the head, this problem began to improve towards the end of the research. The onset of industrial action masked the extent to which the senior management team was successful.

My research has shown that there was a stratified perception of management and leadership at Hillside School that depended on the position and status of the staff. This perception gap was damaging to the school, as it resulted in the alienation of a significant element of the assistant staff from the middle and senior management. Staff at all levels expressed organisational dissatisfaction when routine management failed to operate effectively. This was different in kind from the more hostile criticism from the Junior Assistant Staff, which centred on their perceptions of the head's management style.

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Whilst the head's direct support for and involvement with assistant staff is desirable, effective support can be provided by middle and senior management. What seems clear is that leadership, at whatever level, needs to take account of the feelings of staff as individuals as well as team members or professionals. These differentiated perceptions of leadership affected the extent to which staff felt involved and consulted by the headteacher, and their consequent levels of job satisfaction.

Fullan (1991) supports my analysis. He suggests that forces maintaining the status quo are systematic, and that the current system is held together in many different cross-cutting ways. He quotes Marris (1975):

all real change involves loss, anxiety and struggle. Failure to recognise this phenomenon as natural and inevitable has meant that we tend to ignore important aspects of change and misinterpret others...the response (to change) is characteristically ambivalent (p7).

New experiences are always initially reacted to in the context of a 'familiar reliable construction of reality' in which people must be able to attach personal meaning to the experiences, regardless of how meaningful they may be to others. Marris (1975) describes this as:

a conservative impulse that...seeks to consolidate skills and attachments whose secure possession provides the assurance to master something new (p22)

Change at Hillside on the micro-political scale: stratification, involvement and estrangement.

A number of my observations pointed to the importance of a feeling of involvement, but involvement can take different forms, according to one's position in the stratification of staff. The following examples illustrate these points. The staff at Hillside were willing to accept new procedures for reporting to parents and course options after discussion in

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which all felt involved. There was significantly less enthusiasm for the changes to the curriculum and the working week that were published in the Pink Paper, with little apparent opportunity for discussion as a result of the industrial action.

At Hillside School the staff could be divided into five broad groups: senior management; heads of faculty; heads of year; Established Assistant Staff and Junior Assistant Staff. Each group had a particular relationship with the head that differed from the other groups. The effects of stratification on staff morale are shown in the diagram on the following page. The stratification was exacerbated by the onset of industrial action, which had the effect of polarising staff.

The senior management team, though reporting difficulties in the development of a team identity, generally enjoyed easy access to the head and felt able to influence him on most matters of school policy. They found him approachable and sympathetic to staff problems.

Heads of faculty enjoyed considerable autonomy in their areas of responsibility. Several commented that the head trusted them to manage their faculties properly. Heads of faculty also enjoyed easier access to the head and greater influence on policy-making. They tended to dominate discussion at staff meetings, and were part of the middle management teams that formulated school policy. They perceived themselves to be in a direct and personal relationship with the head and the senior staff.

High & Low Morale at Hillside School: An adaptation of William's model						
	Tenacity & Fortitude	Group Cohesion	Leadership Synergy	Adventurous striving	Personal reward & Challenge	
Senior Management Team 1	Low: do not feel previous success recognised or valued.	Low: group do not meet regularly.	Low: group have not identified their relationship or task skills; poor at vision.	Low: have little experience of success to build on.	Low for members of initial SMT.	
Senior Management Team 2	Low: do not meet so do not experience group sense of achievement: this began to change towards the end of the research.	Low: group do not meet regularly.	Low: initially: group have not identified their relationship or task skills; poor at vision: this began to change towards the end of the research.	Low: initially; little experience of success to build on; this began to change towards the end of the research.	High: for recently appointed members of second SMT.	
Faculty heads	High: strong individuals with clear developmental ideas. Success in meeting their expectations, influencing & changing school policy.	High: group meets regularly & feel they are influential.	High: strong relationship with Head & strong sense of shared purpose; sense of individual responsibility & freedom to make decisions.	High: group were able to meet individual targets & as a group were able to change group targets.	High: financial rewards, prospects of promotion; senior status; institutional esteem from colleagues and senior management. Freedom to take decisions.	
Year Heads	Low: Felt demoted and second class citizens. Individually less strong. Did not feel sense of achievement.	Low: group meet but feel they have little influence: signs of group splitting.	Low: group lacks confidence and show uncertainty of their task aims. They do not show a strong common vision; becoming an Out group Relationships with in the group satisfactory.	Low: Uncertainty over aims/vision affects their sense of achievement. Little experience of group success. See role as maintenance rather than developmental.	Low : reward received are lower financially and in terms of status than faculty heads: feeling of low esteem by the institution. Little freedom to take decisions.	
Established Assistant Staff	High where access to faculty head and headteacher is good.	Variable by faculty: Strong in Faculties B&C Improved by access to head.	High: enjoyed positive relationships with faculty head, and easy access to SMT and Head.. Able to define their own targets within the school.	High: were a mutually supportive group on the staff & within faculties. Felt had success & were able to build on it.	High: had rewards of position, recognition & influence. Contact/value of Head /SMT raised self esteem.	
Junior Assistant staff	Low: Interest focused on students and out of school activities.	Variable by faculty: Strong in Faculties B & C Improved by access to head.	Low: strong sense of alienation; of being an <i>out group</i> ; signalled by accessibility: strong ideal of head who would make them feel part of the <i>in-group</i> .	Low , especially in Faculties A, and initially in Faculty D, where there is perceived to be a lack of leadership and little sense of group goals.	Low: Anxieties over personal finance; status of teachers; their individual status.	

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Heads of year did not enjoy the same close relationship with the headteacher. They commented on the extent to which the pastoral dimension was overlooked when staff were appointed. They felt that pastoral management was not regarded with the same importance as management of the academic curriculum, despite the school's aims giving both elements of the school's management equal status. In general terms, the heads of year were paid on a lower salary scale than faculty heads, and were younger and less experienced staff.

Their responsibilities tended to focus on the day to day issues of maintaining the institution. Pastoral work was not perceived by assistant staff to be valued as highly as academic work in the school, and the status of year heads reflects this. Only where there was an exceptional head of year who actively sought to encourage his team of tutors to participate in the development of policy was there a change in perception (Chapter 12, p196-198).

Established Assistant Staff, who had been teaching for a number of years, and frequently held positions of responsibility below faculty or year head, reported easy access to the head when they wished. They shared the view of senior staff and faculty heads that he was supportive of members of staff who faced difficulties.

The Junior Assistant Staff were largely made up of recently appointed and relatively inexperienced younger members of staff. They had a rather different perception of the school's management structure. They did not share the view of the head as supportive of assistant staff, and found him inaccessible. They interpreted this as a lack of interest in them personally, in their professional work, and by implication in the running of the school as a whole. This group was consistently critical of most aspects of the school's management,

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especially after the action began. Riseborough & Poppleton's (1991) work suggests there should also be a sixth group made up of inexperienced beginners.

In my view, the stratification of the staff reflected the level of direct personal contact they had with the head. Staff at the top of the management tree were closer to the head and therefore more able to share in informal expressions of purpose. They enjoyed good personal relationships with the head, and commented positively on his personal qualities, his sympathy and understanding, his willingness to listen and his desire to bring about a change in the school management style. Junior Assistant Staff, who enjoyed less personal contact with the head, expressed much less positive views of their relationship. They relied on their managers to relay the vision at second hand. Where middle managers failed to report back, staff were much more likely to be disaffected. The lack of a structure to monitor the work of middle managers meant that the experience and job satisfaction of assistant staff was left to chance and depended on the level of commitment and management expertise of faculty and year heads.

There is evidence in the literature to support my analysis. Rosenholtz (1989), quoted in Fullan (1991), suggests that rational solutions to problems of innovation have backfired because they ignore the culture of the school. Schools in which teachers have a shared consensus about the goals and organisation of their work are more likely to incorporate new ideas directed to student learning. Shared meaning characterised those schools that were continually improving. In contrast, teachers in low consensus schools experienced a much greater degree of isolation, shouldering their burdens alone. Fullan goes on to argue that teachers are preoccupied with day to day matters. If schools and other agencies do not

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develop a consensus, there is no reason for the teacher to believe in change. There are few incentives (and large costs) to find out whether a given change will turn out to be worthwhile. Marris' (1975) suggestion that any innovation cannot be assimilated unless its meaning is shared was apparent at Hillside. Similarly, Little's (1981) suggestion that school improvement is most surely and thoroughly achieved when teachers work together to discuss concrete issues of teaching practice, observe each other teaching and help each other with useful evaluation of their teaching was apparent in the work of the head of year already discussed (Chapter 12 pp.196-198). She argues that improvement requires consensus, debate and inter-action between all participants in planned change.

Fullan (1991) emphasises the role of the head/principal in the management of change. He suggests that effective principals showed an active interest by spending time talking to teachers, planning, helping teachers get together and being knowledgeable about what was happening. They found ways of reducing the amount of time spent on routine administrative matters. His evidence shows that many teachers want to inter-act with colleagues on improvements and want direct support from principals. The principal, in other words, is the key to creating the conditions for the continuous professional development of teachers. He also suggests that the pattern and quality of relationships established by the head will pervade the relationships of the school. An adversarial stance will lead to conflict, whilst support and trust will help develop co-operation and consensus. He suggests that school improvement is an organisational process.

Fullan describes change as an additional pressure for teachers who are already under severe stress, with low-self esteem. Change is a highly personal experience, as well as an

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institutional one. It can make matters better or worse. He advocates inter-active professionalism with teachers and others working in small groups, inter-acting frequently in the course of planning, testing new ideas, attempting to solve different problems and assessing effectiveness, etc. He seems to see change as operating most successfully at the micro-level.

The closest analysis of staff perceptions to mine is that of Riseborough & Poppleton (1991). They argue that there is significant stratification among assistant staff in secondary schools. They identify two groups of assistant teachers: veterans with more than five years experience, usually on incentive allowances 2 or 3, and beginners; young teachers with up to four years experience with no incentive allowances. They found that the veterans thought teaching had become work rather than a vocation. Changes in social attitudes meant that the traditional authority of the teacher had been threatened. Many insisted that they would leave if they could and only stayed because they were stuck because of contraction of opportunities. They saw themselves in conflict with the wider world. They showed considerable antagonism to the 'bloody hierarchy', the senior management team, who they saw as cowardly staff officers who had defected to the rear and from there interfered with the real work of teaching. Heads were seen as committing the sin of not looking after, and often undermining, the interests of class teachers. The veterans resented 'management' imposing decisions without any serious consultation, especially when there was perceived to be a separation of hierarchical conception of innovation that was divorced from classroom execution, and was introduced without any consultation. Their vocabulary was strikingly familiar. Military metaphors were common and school was seen as a battleground.

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The authors interpreted this as a high degree of polarisation, with the hierarchy unable to motivate the veterans by offers of promotion. They also found that the veterans were hostile to the beginners, who were criticised for their enthusiasm, high work rate and lack of classroom control. Most veterans had developed alternative extra-school concurrent careers, and family and home were regarded as more important than work.

The young teachers showed high commitment and saw a career future for themselves. They tended to see the veterans as reactionary and conservative. The veterans were perceived as dead wood waiting for retirement, who had to be carried by the beginners and the two groups formed mutually exclusive cliques. The beginners felt unable to speak in staff meetings as they were dominated by the veterans.

This research has some similarities with my research at Hillside, and some differences. This is probably explained because of the different labelling of the groups. My research at Hillside included only two teachers who would have fitted in the young beginners group, and they showed similar attitudes to those found by Riseborough & Poppleton (1991). However, the staff with five years or more teaching experience did not form as homogenous a group as Riseborough & Poppleton suggest. This leads me to consider whether there should in fact be three groups: Beginners, Junior Assistant Staff and Established Assistant Staff. Many of the Established Assistant staff showed different reactions to those found by Riseborough & Poppleton and my argument has been that their more positive attitude was related to their ease of access to the head and sense of involvement in the school's policy-making. For all assistant staff, the quality of middle management leadership was also a key factor in their level of morale and job satisfaction.

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It is possible to characterise the three groups in a different way: Established Assistant Staff who have access to the power and the decision-making process; Junior Assistant Staff who feel they have little access to power and the decision-making process, and beginners who are yet to try out their skills in the micro-political world of school decision-making. That beginners are frustrated by the perceived dead wood of the veterans supports the arguments reported in Chapter 12 that the quality of middle managers in developing a team approach can have a great effect on team morale.

Members of the middle management group who felt estranged from the decision-making process, also demonstrated behaviour similar to that recorded by Riseborough & Poppleton. As estrangement was caused largely by a perceived demotion that resulted from a change in the power structure, this is not surprising.

Estrangement is one micro-political effect of resistance to change, what Marris (1975) describes as dynamic conservatism on an individual scale. It arose at Hillside for two reasons: firstly, changes were initiated without the full consent of those involved, especially those likely to be adversely affected. To some extent this is inevitable if the changes involve re-structuring, or the attempts by a new head to work round an influential sitting tenant whom s/he perceives to be obstructive. The second effect was that the changes undermined the status and power of some staff who were the losers in the power re-shuffle. This challenged their self-concept and personal morale.

The lack of coherence in the first senior management team derived in part from the lack of a shared vision of the school's aims to guide staff through the changes. This led to

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uncertainty and low morale for staff faced with a fundamental change in the power relationships in the school.

The change of management style also led to changes in power relationships at middle management level. Faculty heads gained influence and authority. Heads of year lost some of their status and influence. On occasions, pastoral heads reacted to their loss of power by developing estranged behaviour.

Estranged year heads ambushed the head and senior management in staff meetings. The meetings became ritual confrontations focused on symbolic coded issues, like uniform and the Open School policy that were key elements in the change of management. In this way, disagreements over management style were disguised as discussions over details of policy implementation when they were in reality attacks on the policy itself. The group also became closely supportive of each other, and this mutual network gave them personal support when their professional position faced significant change. For them, the two strands of positional and personal networks were in conflict, and that conflict was played out through both overt and covert opposition to changes in school policy. In that way their self-esteem was able to withstand the challenge to their personal morale that resulted from a perceived change in their status. Group cohesion and the creation of a personal constituency or sub-group was essential for survival as a member of an out-group. Individuals who lack support become isolated and detached from the organisation, and are easily marginalised. The diagram on the following page shows the different morale of Involved and Estranged staff.

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Staff Morale: Behaviour patterns of Involved and Estranged Staff: Based on work by Williams (1984) and Blackburn (1985)		
Williams' morale factors	Involved staff; Supporters; In-Group.	Estranged staff; Resisters; Out-Group.
Tenacity & Fortitude	work to clear plan; seek to identify & overcome problems; loyalty; positive.	resist plan; establish that problems arise from their loss of power; legitimise opposition; negative.
Adventurous Striving	look forward; seek to share leadership power; have power and status enhanced; have experience valued; have an official constituency; appreciate the complexity of problems; interpret problems as challenges.	look back; seek to enlarge or reassert power; have power and status diminished; feel experience is devalued; seek unofficial sub-group constituency; look for simple solutions to complex problems.
Leadership Synergy	identify with leadership; support leadership actively and feel involved; become a focus for support.	resist leadership; oppose leadership covertly & openly by ambush & surprise; become a focus for dissent.
Group Cohesion	loose knit group; share perceptions within the leadership; public recognition by the leadership.	close knit group; share perceptions within the sub-group; recognition within the sub-group.
Personal Reward	opinions matter; high professional esteem; high self esteem; feel valued; get promoted; satisfaction from task completion.	opinions ignored; seek external rewards; low self esteem; feel marginalised; leave or fight; dissatisfaction: previous success undone or devalued.

This conflict between positional and personal power bases and networks has been further explored by Paechter and Head (1996) in the context of conflict between male and female teachers of design and technology. In their study, men and women used power differently, and they suggest that an emphasis on positional power can cloud the complex realities of gender and power relationships.

In this instance, estrangement developed because of changes in the power relationships within the school's management. My research shows that uncertainty and change in an

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organisation or team can damage morale. A detailed investigation of the factors that influence morale at the individual level was not a part of this study. Further investigation into the defining moments that change the morale of individual staff and the way this affects their relationship with formal and informal power structures would be an interesting line of inquiry to pursue.

What seems to be apparent is that changes in power relationships are likely to present a challenge to some holders of positional power. Whether the changes come from external or internal sources seems to be less important. The reality is that the changes challenge the status and self esteem of the post holder who is deemed to be demoted or by-passed by the new structure. The consequence of such change appears to manifest itself either in estrangement and opposition in school, or in the adoption of alternative values that provide self esteem and are based outside the school organisation.

Work by other researchers sheds some interesting light on my analysis. Marris (1975) says that to attribute dynamic conservatism to the stupidity of individuals within social systems, is to misread the situation. He argues that

...The power of social systems over individuals becomes understandable, I think, only if we see that social systems provide...a framework of theory values and related technology which enables individuals to make sense of their lives. Threats to the social system threaten this framework.(p51)

Perhaps the reason for this is explained by Marris (1975):

The reformers have already assimilated these changes to their purposes, and worked out a reformulation which makes sense to them, perhaps through months or years of analysis and debate. If they deny others the chance to do the same, they treat them as puppets dangling by the threads of their own conceptions. (p166)

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Riseborough & Poppleton's work demonstrates and supports the argument I have advanced that teachers' careers go through different stages, and their morale changes as this happens. Work by Blackburn (unpublished 1985, p73) and Hubermann (1988) shows that teachers' attitudes change as their careers progress, and French (1988) discusses the importance of critical incidents in affecting and changing individual staff attitudes and morale. Evans (1992) discusses the importance of morale as an individual issue. Mills (1986) suggests that teacher stress leads to burn out, early retirement or hibernation in a comfortable niche. Borg & Riding (1991) argue that teachers' stress, job satisfaction and career commitment were closely linked, with most stressed teachers most likely to be absent or leave teaching, but they do not investigate the causes.

Effects on Morale of Industrial action

In this section I examine the effect of the action at Hillside School

The overall picture after two years of research was of a head trying to implement change, with some residual opposition due to past loyalties. The attempts to initiate change had led to some uncertainty amongst staff at all levels, though there was a general feeling that the direction of policy was right, and the devil lay in the detail. The head had taken steps to improve the detailed management of the school by re-structuring the senior team, when the industrial action began. The benefits of the re-organisation were, therefore, yet to be fully felt. There was a need to communicate the vision more clearly to staff at all levels. Leaving it to the middle managers was not entirely successful.

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The period of professional action effectively prevented this process continuing. In 1983 and 1984/5, action by teachers prevented meetings taking place. The development of more open democratic decision-making came to a halt. Where decisions were needed, the head was obliged to take them in isolation, and his attempts to involve staff through consultative documents were treated with suspicion (Chapter 14, p234/5).

The head's personal involvement in building relationships, and the perceived problems of accessibility were a cause of concern to staff before the action began. This had an adverse effect on morale before the action started, and the effect was magnified once the action started. It led to a breakdown of relationships within the organisation and the development of an alternative power structure based on teachers' associations, and the substitution of personal survival aims for the school's own aims.

During the industrial action, teachers were unwilling to put in extra hours to enable meetings, parents' evening and extracurricular activities to take place. Perhaps the most significant effect of the teacher action at Hillside School was the way the morale and social cohesion of the staff group was destroyed by internal quarrels. The effects of low morale appeared to relate to a greater degree to aspects of institution management and the staff's social relationships (Chapter 14, p236-238).

There was a division of opinion about the extent to which the head could affect the situation. Many staff, including one union representative, regarded him as powerless to change events outside his control. Other staff thought that the head should be able to do "something", to show solidarity with the staff. Suggestions included writing to parents

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explaining the justice of the teachers' case and closing the school whenever action took place to maximise its effect. The LEA guide-lines at this time put pressure on heads to minimise the effects of the action and keep schools open as far as possible. Given the wide variation of opinion on the staff, I doubt that any action taken by the head would have commanded the support of the whole of the staff, and may well have been more divisive. Such action may also have led to conflict with the LEA and damaged the head's role as boundary manager. In this respect, my findings closely reflect Weindling & Earley's (1987) view that:

heads had to walk a tightrope during the dispute. While they generally sympathised with the teachers, they also had to keep the schools running. (p90)

The teacher action demonstrated to me that not all problems of morale were within the head teacher's control. It provided one example of the way external bodies can be seen to cause problems for school management. Decisions at LEA or Government level meant heads were forced to accept decisions that were made elsewhere, and over which they had little control (Chapter 14). In this respect heads must have felt something of the frustrations Junior Assistant Staff felt at Hillside. The action led to feelings of powerlessness and frustration. It undermined staff morale and the relationships between headteachers and assistant staff, giving heads much more of a role as managers, and teachers a technician role (Ball 1988).

Morale

Morale operates at a number of levels. Its importance at the institutional macro-level is well documented (Chapter 5). This research has adapted Williams' (1984) view of morale at the institutional level to demonstrate that morale is also a significant contributor to

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success at the team level (Chapter 12). However, it is also apparent that morale is a personal experience that also operates at the individual micro-level. In this section I explore morale at Hillside school in these three contexts.

The morale of staff is affected by a range of events and circumstances, some are within the head's control, and some are not. The head's chosen management style can affect the way the staff perceive his leadership, and feel about their work, even in areas that are not directly within the head's control. The level of morale affects the smooth running of the school.

My approach of examining de-facto leadership and its effects has effectively identified these factors. Structure can be irrelevant if power is exercised by non-positional leaders, e.g. estranged staff, leading to conflict between structural and de-facto power. My perspective proposes a combination of formal structures with subjective concepts so that the way staff feel about their work is recognised as a factor that affects the operation of the structures. In this way it is possible to develop a reciprocity between structures and actuality, with a recognition that how people feel about their work affects the way they do it, and this in turn affects success, irrespective of the structures of management (Paechter & Head 1996).

Other workers confirm that external factors produce these effects. Chilver (1988) found that morale was affected by external factors, including a widespread feeling that teachers had been unfairly blamed for the faults of the education system, which had undermined their self-esteem. French (1988) found that there were an increasing number of external constraints and issues of a political and economic nature, often linked to central

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government policies that affected teachers' morale. He quotes the chair of the LEA in his study as saying:

At a time when the secretary of state should be restoring morale among the teaching profession, he is undermining its confidence.

Mills (1986) suggests that changes in working conditions and relationships causes stress. She argues that the actual operation of the organisation needs to be studied, as well as the paper plan. Bush (1995) identifies six management styles. He suggests that one difficulty of applying different models of educational management lies in their conceptualisation. He discusses the conflict between formal and subjective models of management and suggests:

The official structure of schools and colleges should be examined alongside considerations of the individual behaviour and perceptions of staff and students. Whilst institutions cannot be understood fully without an assessment of the meanings of the participants, these interpretations are of limited value unless the more formal and stable aspects of the organisations are also examined" (p108/9)

Morale at the institutional level

As this thesis shows, in my view morale is a composite concept. It can be an expression of the way self-esteem affects an individual or a group's identity. It involves feelings of worth and value, both individually and as part of the group. It is affected by the way organisations listen to individuals and value what they say. It is reinforced by being enfranchised as an intelligent member of the organisation, able to take part in making its policy, and being regarded as having a useful contribution to make towards achieving success. It is about the essential humanity of being valued as a person, rather than by function.

From the beginning my views have been influenced by Richardson (1973), who says that an essential part of leadership is to seek understanding of the interplay between rational and

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irrational forces, and through that growing understanding to use the authority that has been invested in the leadership role to help those to whom one owes leadership. It is not only the designated leader who has to exercise authority; all responsible persons must do so.

Richardson's concept of *senticence*, the way staff feel about their work and their interpersonal relationships, has proved illuminating in understanding what happened at Hillside. Her view that schools experiencing change need to develop appropriate structures, but also be alert to the kind of unconscious processes that will be going on within and between structures is also clearly demonstrated.

During the research I came to value the insights of Nias et al (1989), who discovered that although staff relationships were apparently simple, in reality they were highly complex. A *culture of collaboration* gave both diversity to the institution and resilience to the staff group, and was consciously initiated and fostered by the head. Its maintenance was largely a result of apparently unconscious trivial actions that gave group cohesion by allowing staff to demonstrate that they identified with the group. The culture of collaboration was closely related to the head's sense of identity with the school, and a clear sense of purpose for the institution and the children in it.

There are also strong echoes in the work of Hargreaves and Tucker (1991). They argue that supportive and collaborative cultures help teachers. When these are missing, teachers feel trapped in a persona of perfection. To confess personal or professional difficulties is interpreted as showing signs of incompetence, inadequacy or unsuitability. This leads to feelings of guilt, often caused by the implicit value-systems of the school's own culture. If a

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school has a culture that places high emphasis on not failing the children or getting the job done regardless of personal well being, guilt is likely to be increased. The consequences of guilt are seen as entirely negative, not only for the individual teacher, but also for the school and the children. The authors argue that teachers can be helped to recognise and cope with feelings of guilt by the development of 'professional communities of certainty and support'. This research supports the views expressed at Hillside that the quality of support from middle as well as senior managers can have a significant effect on teacher morale.

The emphasis in these studies is on developing a supportive team approach and energising staff through personal involvement and commitment. A primary school is sufficiently small for this to be a feasible and attainable target for the head. In a secondary school the head is likely to demonstrate commitment and involvement, but needs to rely on middle management staff to assist in the development of the team identity that is part of the recipe for success. Similarly, Sikes et al (1985) found that all the teachers in the study believed that, ideally, every teacher in a school should be able to feel that everyone was working towards the same aims and that there was consensus of opinion, openness and mutual support that could be counted on.

Morale at team level

This research has dealt chiefly with the way teachers feel about their work, and in particular the way they feel about the way they are led. Teaching is different in some important respects from working in industry, or in other professional groups. Unlike most professions, teaching assembles fairly large groups of professional staff together, and

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expects them to act in a corporate manner, but on separate tasks. The status of the head is unique. On the one hand he has a role as the leader of a group of professionals that respects the professionalism of the rest of the team. On the other hand he is a task manager, with formidable powers of patronage, and is accountable to a governing body that does not necessarily have detailed or current knowledge or understanding of the problems of the profession. Conflict with the head was identified by French (1988) and Mills (1986) as the most significant factor in critical incidents, and these were seen to have a great effect on the individual teacher's morale.

The quality of interpersonal relationships, and the support networks that people build are important. Power-based relationships are unlikely to sustain a high level of morale over a prolonged period, and especially when under pressure, whether external or internal. Relationships based on mutual respect and esteem, both personal and professional, are more likely to be able to withstand such pressures and therefore maintain the morale of the partners in the relationship. The feelings people have as a result of belonging to a group contributes to their personal satisfaction.

Creating a staff support and development structure helps to maintain the identity and sense of belonging of the staff. This helps build morale and team identity, a view reflected by Chilver (1988). The four faculties at the centre of this study had very different group identities that were reflected in differences in their morale (Chapter 12).

Smith (1976), and Williams and Lane (1976), have also described morale in terms of organisations and leadership (Chapter 5). However, there are a number of difficulties with

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the models of morale they propose. A large organisation like a school is divided into smaller teams with particular tasks. Staff morale is compound and affirmation of worth comes from a variety of sources. In reality the school has a variety of tasks: managing pupil behaviour; developing the curriculum; producing good exam results; developing and managing change, etc. Each task is likely to have its own team and team leader, so a variety of leaders at different levels in the school hierarchy will be necessary.

This thesis demonstrates that it is possible to map the morale of different teams within a school, by adapting Williams' (1984) model as I have done. Identifying the level of morale in different teams provides a useful additional tool in studying school management. Morale alone is not a satisfactory yardstick for measuring effective management. It does provide an indicator of the success of leadership, which is a component in the achievement of the team's and the organisation's task objectives. It provides a way of measuring success in meeting 'task needs', one of the three needs identified by Adair (1973). (The other two needs Adair identified were 'team maintenance' and 'individual needs'.) Success in meeting task needs can be measured using other indicators that have formed part of the school effectiveness debate from Rutter et al. (1979) onwards.

Morale at the individual level within the institution

Morale is also an individual experience, and can be different for individual members of staff at different times. The factors that influence it are more complex than most literature describes. Each teacher's morale is made up of a number of components depending on the web of relationships that surround the working environment, which French (1988) describes as 'complex variables'. Individuals belong to a variety of groups and are,

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therefore, managed by a variety of leaders. Membership of each team has an effect on an individual teacher's morale. The most junior assistant teacher may have little direct personal contact with the head in a large secondary school, and feel that s/he is alienated from the group of which the head is leader. However, s/he belongs to a faculty group, a year group, a peer group of similar staff, and possibly has a professional leader or a mentor. The support of other colleagues will be a key factor, and the head's influence is likely to be minimal, except in setting the parameters of the organisation. In other words, morale is not simply a group phenomenon; it is also an individual issue, and affected by performance and recognition in different groups to which we belong (Chapter 12). Mills (1986) identifies the self concept as the focal point of teacher problems.

Neglect of morale as a management issue may lead to teachers becoming disaffected and estranged. Staff may concentrate on personal priorities of surviving in the school environment, or maximising the rewards from teaching whilst minimising their own level of commitment to the institution. At its most extreme, disaffection with the school management, or the head teacher's personal style, might manifest itself in opposition to the head, either through professional associations, or clandestine subversion. This can lead to the development of alternative power groups in school, with the possibility that such groups may challenge the traditional role of the school's leadership.

A Final View

I have argued throughout this thesis that the management of staff, and the maintenance of high levels of morale for all staff is a key element in the development of effective management. I have sought to demonstrate that morale is not simply an aim for an

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organisation, or a side issue for management, but the key to understanding the way the management process is turned into practical action. I have argued in this thesis for a new approach to the study of morale in schools.

My thesis demonstrates that morale is more subtle and variable than work by Williams suggests. My analysis by staff strata, and in terms of management teams, helps to explain the differences in group morale that were observed. I have shown that morale can be mapped within an institution at a variety of levels, reflecting the reality of experience in the institution of different groups of staff. In this way it becomes possible to review the level of morale in different teams within the institution, and consider the factors that may be affecting it. This development provides the tools to evaluate morale as a management issue, and thus identify the quality of management at sectional level, whether through different teams or different staff groups.

I also argue that morale is capable of being understood within the institutional level, whilst recognising that there will always be an individual element in every member of staff's morale. Work by Evans (1992) suggests that morale is so individual, and so affected by the personal baggage that people bring to the work place, as to make an organisational analysis impossible. I do not entirely accept this view. I would not disagree with the essentially personal nature of morale and the way personal and private considerations affect the individual's attitude to work on a day to day basis. We are all familiar with the demoralising effect of life crises on ourselves and our colleagues. However, this argument does not mean that the institution in which the individual works has a neutral effect. The

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way the institution, or the sub-section in which the individual works, responds to and treats the individual does in itself have an effect on the morale of that individual.

An organisation that is perceived to be warm, friendly and supportive will give positive benefits of morale to the individual worker, and help and reassure them when their personal self-esteem and private morale is low. By contrast, an organisation that is perceived to be cold, unfriendly and unsupportive, unconcerned with the individual's needs and difficulties and only interested in maintaining performance irrespective of personal considerations, is likely to further undermine the morale of an individual. This is not simply a question of friendly support on a personal level. It is a management issue. Creating a friendly and supportive environment encourages colleagues to attend work on the marginal days when personal issues make absence appear attractive. It creates a climate where people will work extra hours at inconvenient times because they feel that they are a member of the organisation, with a stake in it, rather than an employee whose responsibility is limited to a cash transaction. In this sense, a policy of positive morale management transforms the nature of work from employment to participation in an enterprise.

I have also discussed the importance of critical moments in the development of morale. This is an area that deserves further study. Work by French (1988) suggested that critical incidents had a significant effect on teacher morale in the eighties. There are a number of issues that are unclear, and would benefit from further study. The individuals French interviewed had experienced disappointment. The interviews recorded this, and attempted to examine reasons for their low morale. The difficulty here lies in the lack of objectivity of the method. We may all be disappointed if we do not make progress in our careers in the

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way we would wish, and it is essentially human to blame our lack of success on critical encounters with significant figures in our employment history. The problem with this approach is that it does not triangulate the experience, as has been possible in my research. To form a judgement about the validity of the individual's response to such a critical incident would demand some additional information about the reasons the organisation felt the critical incident developed in the way it did. An incompetent teacher, correctly disciplined and dismissed after ample support, encouragement and further training is nevertheless likely to see dismissal as a critical incident. That does not mean that the dismissal is not objectively justifiable and correct. What matters in this context is the quality of management provided for the individual at the time of the critical incident. If the individual perceives the incident as one in which he/she received no support or opportunities to demonstrate his/her worth, demoralisation represents a failure of management and a waste of human resources. If the incident is managed positively and the individual sees a career change as a positive step, the critical incident has been managed in a successful manner and the morale of both the individual and the institution enhanced.

I have argued that morale is a key factor in the development of career patterns of teachers that Nias (1989) and Blackburn (unpublished diagram, 1985, shown on p73) have recorded and recognised. However, they do not examine the effects of morale on the stages in career development that they record, or the effect of teachers' personal choices on the effective functioning of their schools. I would argue that where teachers make a conscious decision to cease seeking career progression, and choose to stagnate and maximise their external benefits by minimum work effort and commitment, the effectiveness of the school is reduced. A positive staff management policy geared to maintaining their professional

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interest and involvement should enable their professional experience and individual expertise to be used more effectively by the school. This is also an area that would benefit from further study.

I have also argued that different groups of teachers have different levels of morale depending upon their position and seniority within the school hierarchy. This in part reflects their community of professional interest and their work and social groupings. If the purpose of school management is to develop a united team, so that the tasks of the institution can be fulfilled, the reasons for the development of stratified or sectional morale demand further study. In particular the quality of management by team leaders has been demonstrated to be a key factor in developing team morale and identity across stratified staff groups.

The morale of stratified groups is a reflection of the development of teacher careers, in that teachers progress through the strata as their careers develop (or not). The two elements are therefore two sides of a single issue. The experience and morale of the different stratified groups is related to their career development, salary levels and extent of involvement in the school's management and consultation structure. Research into the careers of teachers examines the same issue from the perspective of the individual and his/her progress through the strata. Critical incidents can be an important focus for teacher's career decisions: whether they decide to opt for stagnation or continue to seek professional development and fulfilment. Critical incidents form the third element of what becomes a triangle of staff morale and development.

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I am arguing here that the three elements of teacher stratification, teacher career stages and critical incidents are all closely inter-linked. New teachers start their professional life as members of a profession stratified by experience, seniority, salary and influence. They progress, or fail to progress, as a result of critical incidents at key points in their careers. A broken promise, or a reason to question the integrity or honesty of the leader can be a significant critical incident. Such incidents can have a ripple effect on the organisation as a whole. As knowledge of the incident spreads through the staff, it becomes magnified. It becomes part of the mythology of the school, and contributes to the establishment of the de-facto management style and the perceived ethos of the school. This in turn leads to estrangement from the leadership and the development of estranged behaviour described in the thesis.

A policy of positive staff management that is well implemented, reassures all members of staff, irrespective of their position or career progression to date, that they are valued and have a contribution to make to the organisation. In that way their energy can be harnessed for the good of the organisation rather than dissipated through displacement activity in an attempt to reconcile themselves to professional disappointment.

The one constant feature that emerged throughout this research at all levels was the desire of staff to be consulted and involved in the management of their school. What seems to matter most is that the individual's efforts and contribution are recognised by "the boss", whatever the boss's actual position in the hierarchy. If this recognition comes from the head, the whole institution is strengthened and morale is high. Staff will identify with the school, their commitment will be enhanced, and confidence and optimism will contribute to

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a general raising of morale. If this recognition is not available from the head, staff will accept it from a member of the senior team or a line manager. They will experience a measure of job satisfaction, but with less of a sense of commitment to the school as a whole. It will be more of a local commitment to the particular individual who holds the post. Where there is no recognition, staff are likely to be frustrated and demotivated. Other researchers have produced similar findings. (Mills 1986; French 1988; Sikes et. al. 1985; Weindling and Earley 1987). Sikes and colleagues' view that morale could be improved if the barriers between managed and managers could be lowered through more sympathetic two-way communication procedures is particularly persuasive. This would lead to managers becoming more aware of teacher's concerns. French and Mills both found that teachers responded most favourably to heads who offered positive, participative leadership and management, and this view fits well with the analysis offered by Nias et. al. (1989).

My research has shown that maintaining morale is a key responsibility of management, and that schools need to develop ways to manage staff morale, welfare and development as part of their wider management strategy. Schools have recently introduced a number of approaches that are helpful. Such approaches include the use of school development plans to give a shared sense of direction; working parties to contribute to school development planning; line management structures and greater use of team management. A regular process of critical review, both for individual staff through a supportive appraisal system, and for the whole school through a structured process of self-review, should also help improve the quality of staff management. What does seem clear is that schools cannot afford to neglect the morale of their staff if they are to function effectively.

POSTSCRIPT

A MEDITATION ON ROLE AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research has explored the methodology of qualitative research from the viewpoint of a part-time researcher who is unable to immerse himself in a single school study in the traditional fashion of a participant observer. My professional experience as a teacher; my direct experience of middle management roles; my contacts with the school being studied and the existence of a network of people in the school already known to me allows me to claim the position of privileged observer.

Focus and Role: Richardson (1973) and Woods (1979)

My research has focused on the way staff feel about their work and the way they are managed and has attempted to unravel the factors that lead to good or poor motivation. In that sense it has been about teachers and the way an institution generates feelings and identity amongst its staff. It is concerned not so much with what the structures are as the way they affect the staff working within them.

Because the focus was different, this research has relied on a different methodology that hinges on the position of the observer as an insider, a practising teacher who is able to bring a different type of understanding to the school situation. I feel my research position has been closest to Richardson and Woods.

Richardson (1973) had the status of an acknowledged professional academic and went to Nailsea as a consultant. She identified closely with the headteacher perspective in Nailsea, and saw many

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of the events through his eyes. She describes the nature of her collaborative research as involving a large element of subjectivity, as the researcher has a range of previous experiences that would affect her view of the events. She acknowledged that the kind of interpretations she made would include unconscious as well as conscious reactions to the feelings, beliefs and attitudes within the staff group that were largely intuitive and incapable by their very nature of "objective" truth.

Because Richardson was not a member of staff, but an outsider, staff had to make a new relationship with her. As she began to know the staff, her role became a mirror of their feelings of trust in the research, and to some extent in the headteacher. She describes the research as a gradual building up of trust between herself and the staff. She points out that inevitably that trust would have to be tested, which occurred on the two occasions she was ready to publish reports about the school.

She describes the dilemma of reconciling her own feelings about the staff as individuals with her feelings about them as role players in the institution. She wondered whether she would be able to report truthfully about the school without labelling it in some way, and without betraying the trust the staff had placed in her.

Woods' (1979) subject matter was different, but the methodology was very similar in a number of ways. In that part of his research that is concerned with the staff and the importance of staffroom humour, both his subject and his methodology touch on very similar areas to my own.

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Like Woods, I experienced the range of different perceptions of my role, and the vital importance of key informants. The problems of immersion, particularly, haunted me through the period of action. They caused me some measure of despair on more than one occasion. I doubted that it would be possible to write up the work without betraying the confidences of the staff and doing damage to the school.

The issue here is the extent to which it is possible to *get under the skin* of the school without "going native". The position of privilege made the former process easy, and enabled me to judge the context more effectively than if I had been an outsider. But it made me one of the natives from the outset, and the difficulty was in stepping out of that close involvement and being more analytical.

Woods suggests that participant observation is intensely individualistic. He says many field studies give an impression of hit and run: gaining access to an institution, cracking its secrets and then running off to write the definitive version before the ethical problems catch up. I tried to avoid being open to this accusation and to protect the school by timelocking the research for ten years.

Wood's suggestion that immersion or macro-blindness can be a problem for the participant observer is well founded. I needed both physical distance and a change of perspective to help me to overcome some of my initial problems of over-identification. The techniques of interview summary that I adopted were also intended to help overcome this problem.

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My position as a Privileged Observer.

At the beginning of the research period I had been a teacher for fourteen years, and experienced all the major roles up to middle management level. I had, therefore, considerably more experience of the teachers' world than many other researchers, which was an advantage in helping me understand the feelings, tensions and anxieties within the school. It meant I had a high level of professional understanding of school problems. This gave the staff confidence that they were talking to someone whom they knew and trusted, and who understood the nuances of what they were saying. In addition, I can claim a certain privilege in my position because I was a part-time researcher who was also a practising full time teacher. This gave benefits of insight and access, and problems of reporting that may be different from those experienced by full-time professional researchers.

Once access was agreed, my long acquaintance with Hillside, and many of the protagonists gave me much greater insight into *the attitudes that underlie the observed behaviour*, to quote Hargreaves' (1967) phrase, than a less privileged observer would have had. I did not need to shed the researcher role and accept a teacher role.

This is both a source of strength and weakness. However, it gave me an insight into the workings of Hillside School that is very different from the usual access and insight available to researchers. The staff I knew best, I had known for ten years before the research began (compared to Hargreaves, Lacey and Richardson's three years during their researches). I had formed a number of professional and personal friendships with individuals in the school, and they undoubtedly helped me in the research I undertook. The fact that I knew most faculty heads and year heads,

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and many other staff, some of them well, helped me to make judgements about the reliability of evidence that would not be open to any other sort of researcher. They were, in some cases, friends as well as colleagues, and people whose judgement I trusted. They inevitably became my "key informants" (Woods 1979). There were also colleagues with whom I had had little relationship, before the research project commenced, and who were unwilling to become involved in the research.

My depth of knowledge of the background of the school and the staff has enabled me to understand the inter-play and tensions within it. It has enabled me to produce a different quality of data than would have been available to most other researchers. My position gave staff confidence, in that they could be sure I would understand not only the words they said, but also the context of their comments. Being perceived as an insider was a crucial factor in obtaining high quality data and helping to get the staff to elucidate their meanings.

The fact that I enjoyed this measure of their confidence allows me to claim that my position was a very special, privileged one that gave me greater insight into staff attitudes than is normally available to people carrying out ethnographic research.

Data Collection

I was a practising teacher, with responsibilities within another school. I could not attend senior management meetings because I was teaching at the time they took place. My data collection, therefore, could not rely on observation as fully as a more traditional participant observer. My

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observation was limited to middle management and staff meetings, and occasional days I was able to snatch from my own job to visit the school.

I was to some extent selective in my data collection. I was at pains to ensure responses from senior staff, heads of faculty and heads of year, as they had greater access to the decision-making process than more junior staff. At the level of assistant staff, I was more concerned to obtain as full a coverage as possible of a limited number of faculties, and a particular year group, where I felt my inside knowledge helped give me greater insight. To that extent I neglected, or failed to pursue other faculties and year teams in the same detail, and was less thorough in my pursuit of the junior staff in those areas, though the questionnaires were circulated to all staff in an attempt to ensure that all views were represented. I acquired a massive amount of data, and would justify the selection on the grounds of insight and manageable data.

My involvement was a key part of the research at Hillside, particularly in the interview process, where some measure of agreement was inevitably necessary to continue the flow of information that was at the heart of the process. Indeed the level of response from colleagues in interviews was staggering. Colleagues were, for the most part, extremely frank in their views, regarding me as someone to whom they could safely sound off their views about close colleagues to get things off their chest (Woods 1979 and Hargreaves 1967). On occasions their frankness was embarrassing, though I was able, as a result of this openness, to bring about some reconciliation within one faculty that was facing internal splits.

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My research can be described as 'sensitive' in the terms of Sieber and Stanley (1988). There were potential consequences or implications, either directly for the participants in the research or indirectly for the class of individuals represented by the research. The sensitivity of my research posed problems similar to those that Lee (1993) experienced, that I found very difficult and set limits on areas of my enquiry. I was acutely aware of the potential damage that reporting my research could pose to Hillside School at a time when falling rolls and teacher action were affecting schools and parental choice increasing.

Lee also observes that, when asking sensitive questions, the interviewer has an effect on the interviewee and on the answers s/he gives, especially during in-depth interviews like those used at Hillside. My personal knowledge and shared familiarity with the problems of those I was interviewing helped mitigate the element of power relationships that Lee suggests can arise in interviews.

Neutrality is difficult to maintain in an informal interview lasting an hour in a member of staff's home, especially when you have known the member of staff for several years. The dilemma for the interviewer is the extent to which the data becomes skewed by the interviewer's increasing involvement. Some of my interviewees became my key informants and I experienced the difficulties identified by Maguire (1994) who found that chance encounters developed into closer relationships and friendships that facilitated the collection of data. She found that a small number of social actors became crucial to the collection of and reflection on the data being gathered, and points out that silences in the data can be as significant as what is said. She describes her work as a

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‘what is it like investigation’ (Hargreaves 1967). Like Maguire, I worked in the sector I was studying.

Progressive focusing moved the research from general considerations of the effects of management style and change on morale, to a much more sharply focused analysis of the effects of industrial action on the school's management. I started by looking at a relatively simple and emotionally neutral topic - management - and events moved it onto a different, much more fraught level. The planned methodology was not geared to explore this, and the importance of the interviews became central to the acquisition of qualitative data during this period of the research.

The problems of entry and reporting

I am aware of the difficulties of reporting described by Atkinson (1990) and Lee (1993) who argue that there is a moral responsibility on the researcher not to harm people whose situation is being researched, though there is a competing demand for information to enter the public domain and inform future thinking. There is also a danger of deductive disclosure, identifying the actors or the school. There is an argument here to anonymise and disguise data, which may obscure the telling of the story, but is a necessary form of self censorship. I have avoided drawing character vignettes to preserve anonymity, and mixed characters together deliberately to avoid identification. For the same reason, I have not dated interviews, and treated all staff as of the male gender, though this was not the case.

The forthright nature of many of the remarks made to me was on occasions a handicap, as the detail and feeling behind the comments made the information too hot for ready use. In the later

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stages of writing up the research, the antagonism between different sections of the staff that the industrial dispute caused made it difficult for me to discuss my findings with anyone. Only the passage of time has made the situation safer, and the industrial strife of that period is now a bad memory. The picture that emerges is, therefore, both intimate and partial. The frankness and honesty of the staff I did interview, over half the staff, gave a wealth of material some of which is still unusable because of its candour and hostility. My own position was much closer to the middle managers and it is from their perspective, rather than the head's that my research is recorded. This enables me to look for confirmation of Richardson's (1973) finding from the perspective of a different management tier.

Some colleagues thought that I would be able to "do" something about their concerns. On two occasions I did discuss the problems of the internal coherence of the senior management team with the head. These problems were eventually solved, but not until this research was over.

Troman (1996) suggests that the impact of change on participants, especially gatekeepers, shapes their responses to access requests from ethnographers. The author reports that he has been unsuccessful in gaining entry for ethnographic research in several English primary schools. He suggests that ethnographers must develop successful strategies to gain entry, and must develop a reflexivity informed by knowledge of the structure and the macro content in which their negotiations take place. However, a successful gaining of entry is not the end of the story. Conditions attached to the entry permit can define what is possible for the researcher, and this was the position in my case.

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Confidentiality was a key part of the agreement to undertake the research. It caused me great anxiety, especially during the action, when political and management issues became blurred with the personalities and politics in the situation. Some of data collected through interview could not be used, simply because it was so personal, or identifiable. This has meant that some interesting lines of enquiry could not be followed up, and others could not be reported for the sake of the staff concerned.

The constraints that were applied to my research as a precondition of entry into the institution have been discussed in Chapter 4. Access was conditional upon stringent confidentiality conditions that have led to a constant tension that has made the reporting of this research extremely difficult. My privileged position gave me access to much confidential and highly sensitive data. My ability to use the data has been significantly compromised by the undertakings of confidentiality that were part of the access agreement.

Atkinson (1990) discusses the ethnographic genre and the elements of organising and writing research. Ethnography contains different types of writing and these different types of writing have an effect upon the reader because s/he has a framework of expectations that include elements of plot, narrative and character. He discusses the way sociologists represent reality and asks if sociological forms of writing shape the way we see social problems. Sociologists use literary and rhetorical conventions to convey their findings and arguments to convince their colleagues and students of the authenticity of their accounts. He suggests that sociological accounts contain a plot and actors who are characterised sometimes as heroes or villains. They are a representation, a re-construction of an observed reality. The ethnographer needs to distance him/herself from the

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subject matter, but needs the involvement to be authoritative. Attempts to be authoritative lead to the writer becoming assertional, but the language of reporting is not neutral. He suggests that research inevitably implicates us and involves us in the everyday construction of social reality, and that we must recognise that our accounts of the social world are equally implicated.

These reporting difficulties are one of the chief reasons for the delay in completing this thesis. The latter part of the research, affected so greatly by the industrial disputes of the early eighties, fractured the good relationships of the staff room, and put hitherto good colleagues at one another's throats. The relationship between the head and many of the staff became extremely bitter and rancorous. The frankness of the interviews made reporting far more difficult than it had been in the earlier part of the research.

Other methodological points

Maguire (1994) identifies the importance of key moments. She suggests the researcher needs to include an analysis of the historical context of the institution being researched. She found that the focus of the study changed. Her interest in the institution became an interest in the nature of the job of the tutors. She describes some of the features of her study as:

idiosyncratic...but the culture, the history...are not unique I was interested in 'types' of response and criticism, rather than relating them to individuals and recognised problems with preconceptions and empathetic response (p214)

One way to prepare for some of these possibilities is to write everything down. As a privileged observer you are so close to the data that it is very difficult to judge what is likely to be important when you come to write up the research. Issues that seem trivial can later take a much greater significance, especially if they occur in a situation where there is a shared understanding of their

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background. If an issue is a problem for you in your work, and also for the school you are observing, you tend not to record it fully because you understand the problem. When you go back to the data several years later, the context may have been forgotten and so the point of the issue is lost to you.

This is especially true for the informal and casual conversations that appear trivial. These are the most difficult to record accurately. Formal interviews have a prepared agenda, and in my own case were tape recorded. If anything was unclear I could return to the tape, and with the sheet of questions establish the context and come to a fairly accurate conclusion about what was being said. In the informal context this is impossible. You may be caught on the hop, without even a notebook, but the opportunity is too good to miss. The conversation, because it is unscripted, may take you into contexts you did not expect, and which at that time do not form a key part of the research. The information that you receive in this way may change the context of the research, in which case you need the full detail. I tried to make a note of all my informal conversations as soon as they had taken place, but could not catch the full flavour in the same way that I did in tape recorded interviews.

The main problem for the privileged observer (as for a participant observer) is thus closeness to the data. Becoming immersed makes it difficult to be objective at the time the data is collected. Recording all talk as fully as possible provides data that will become objective as the researcher distances him/herself from it. The ethnographic concept of reflexivity describes the way your understanding of events is affected by your interpretation of the way they unfold. This means that you can never be sure, as events are unfolding, which features are important. You never know

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what information will turn out to be important so you have to record as much as you can. It does not matter if you discard it later, but it is infuriating to have snippets of information that you are sure are important and address a key issue, but do not contain sufficient detail to illuminate your thinking or be useable.

One mistake I made was to try to comment on the significance of the data as I recorded it. I did not think it was a mistake at the time, and in one sense it clarified my thinking about where the research was going. Looking back, it meant I thought about the significance of the data as I wrote it up, rather than concentrating on the full detail. Some of the early commentary is naive and simplistic. My time would have been better spent concentrating on recording exactly what was said at the time, and leaving the analysis until later. A more objective point of view would have made it easier to follow Hargreave's (1967) dictum that the key question is "What is going on here?"

Another problem was the shifting nature of the research focus. The relationship between management, morale and personal relationships is complex. Industrial action further complicates the picture. Similarly, the staff focus is complex, because all the staff interact with one another on a daily basis and in different groupings. In that sense, the research was an exploration of the life of a school during a period of transition that was disrupted by political events beyond the school's control. The wealth of detail and information, and the conflicting pulls in different directions as new issues arose made an objective review of the research difficult until considerable time had elapsed.

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Being a teacher was both an advantage and disadvantage. The closeness it gave to the viewpoint of the staff, and the fact that we had a lot of shared experiences from careers in the same world allowed ease of access. It also meant that I did not come to situations with an open mind. I had the prejudices of a practising teacher. I was willing to believe that teachers were undervalued and over-worked, that school management tended to undervalue the work of teaching staff, and that outsiders certainly had no idea of the levels of stress or amounts of work that were part of a teacher's lot.

These are the drawbacks of being a privileged observer. They are compounded by the fact that I remain a practising teacher. Had I started to work at the school simply as a vehicle for covert research, then left the profession, my personal and professional integrity might be in ruins, but the commitment to the school and education would be over. The covert observation methodology may be useful in gaining access to minority social groups for a limited period of time, but does not accord with my sense of professional obligation as a teacher.

However, the position of privileged observer gave me great benefits. I knew the background to almost all the conversations that I had as part of my research. I was able to balance what an individual member of staff said against the knowledge that he had been passed over for promotion, or had had a public row with the head the previous week. I had insight. I had a position that was inside the organisation in a very distinct way, which enables me to report events with considerable confidence.

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Validity and Generalisability

Finally, I return to the consideration of analysis, validity and generalisability in qualitative research when using ethnographic approaches. First I consider the way in which the methodology may have affected the analysis of the data. Ball (1990) describes ethnographic research as a plunge into the unknown. He suggests that ethnographic fieldwork relies primarily on the engagement of the self, and that entry is a multiple negotiation of micro-access. He argues that the means of access may constrain the sorts of data and research relationships available to the fieldworker in the early days. I would agree that it also affects the researcher's ability to publish what s/he finds out.

Ball (1990) identifies three factors which could introduce bias into naturalistic sampling. He suggests that place may be significant, as staff behave differently in different settings. I found that staff were very different when interviewed at home rather than in school. They were more relaxed and willing to talk freely, as if they had shed their professional persona because they were in a different environment. He suggests that time may also be a factor, and attitudes may vary as time varies. My research records changes in staff attitudes against a backdrop of professional change. Thirdly, he defines problems that arise from the researcher being associated with one group of staff. My inability to attend senior management meetings prevented me from seeing the alternative viewpoint of the senior management fully. The fact that I was not present in school during the working day prevented me from having regular informal contact with assistant staff, and sharing their point of view. My perspective is therefore largely shaped by my observation of middle management. I tended to see events from their point of view and most of my key informants were drawn from this group. Ball argues that key informants need to be viewed with caution. They offer

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a perspective, but it is not the only perspective. It embodies its own distortions and partialities. He suggests that informants may have their own purposes for being helpful. I recognise the duality of involvement of key informants in the way members of the estranged group of middle managers were keen to discuss their dissatisfactions with me after sensitive meetings.

Bryman and Burgess (1994) suggest that when evaluating ethnographic data, analysis should take place alongside data collection. I found this problematic because of my closeness to the data and the effect this had on my perspective. I tried to do this, and on occasions regretted it. I found that an immediate reflection on sensitive data sometimes led me to jump to conclusions that were not sustainable on reflection. They were the product of close involvement in the particular scene and open to criticism of over-identification with the data providers. Revisiting the data after a period of time allowed a more objective interpretation, partly because the incident under review could also be construed in the light of subsequent events when other parts of hidden agendas had become more plain. I found, like Bryman and Burgess, that although conceptualisation arose from within the data collection, it was also necessary to revisit it once the data collection was completed and there was time for a cooler more balanced reflection.

Trying to extricate the self from the process was eased by using alternative frames of reference. School documents gave an agreed statement of the school's aims and purposes against which qualitative data could be judged, and questionnaires were quantitative instruments to be assessed separately from, but interpreted in relation to, the qualitative data obtained by interview. Using Williams' work as a framework also allowed a consistent analysis of the interview data and helped create a measure of objectivity. The passage of time created by timelocking the data was

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particularly important. I found that in the early stages of writing up the research my close involvement with the school and the data created significant psychological blocks that made the process almost impossible for several years. Only recently has it become possible for me to interpret the data in a more objective and detached way, and take a wider view of the events I observed.

Secondly I consider **validity and generalisability**. Cohen & Mannion (1980) suggest that problems may arise with differences between different sets of qualitative data. It is not to be expected that complete consensus among data can or should be achieved. What is required is some attempt be made to relate incongruent sets of data in some way or other. It was this problem of incongruent staff attitudes that led me to identify stratification of the staff as a cause of the incongruities.

Cohen and Mannion also argue that research should have internal validity, by which they mean the observer's judgement should not be clouded by his/her close involvement with the group, and represent reality. They also propose that research should possess external validity, which relates to whether the results of the research are applicable to other situations.

Similarly, Hammersley (1992) suggests that there are two overarching criteria for judging ethnographic research: validity and relevance. He defines validity as the truth of the claim being made for the research. Validity is interpreted in terms of selective representation of reality with the amount and nature of evidence that is necessary depending on the type of claim involved and on

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judgements about its plausibility and centrality (judgements whose own validity can never be certain.)

So is my data soft, in Ball's terms? The answer has to be Yes, but the picture presented is consistent, which I believe is evidence of the work's validity. This does not mean that what I have portrayed is **the** truth. I would argue that my analysis of the data is a fair representation of the range of views of "the truth" at the time of the research. It may well not be perceived as a true record of the events, now that time has passed and perspectives changed. It is an approximation of the truth of the way people felt at the time. This brings me to the second of Hammersley's points. Is it **generalisable**? This account is highly specific in time and place and records what a particular group of teachers felt at a particular period. However, I draw on my position of privileged observer, sufficiently in tune with life in the profession today, to claim that the main findings are still relevant. What this research gives is a consistent view of how teachers want to be treated and how they react to the way they are led. To that extent I think, is probably generalisable and I am further convinced of my claim to generalisability because my conclusions fit well with the bulk of the evidence and also confirm other writers' work. The research addresses what Hammersley argues is one of the most valuable features of ethnography: it has a commitment to seeking to *understand* the perspectives of others rather than simply judging them as true or false. It is a question, as Schofield (1989) says, of seeking a good 'fit'.

The issues of access, confidentiality and opportunity are likely to remain the same for any researcher attempting to research one school whilst working full time in another. The key to the privileged observer position is the extent of pre-knowledge of the school, the staff and the inter-

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actions. Coming to the school as an outsider, even with the intention of working in the school, and becoming an insider, as Woods (1979) and Ball (1981) did, would not give the same kinds of insight into the quality of data. It is a question of status. I was essentially a colleague, not a researcher. I was there because I was interested in the school and knew many of the staff, and wanted to do some research. The research was not my only reason for my relationships; there were other personal and professional considerations that applied.

The strength and value of this research methodology has lain in the ability to peel off the layers through specialised inside knowledge. If this research methodology is to be usefully applied in sensitive areas, then some mechanism for protecting an organisation's identity needs to be found. Fictionalising the entire research is one possibility, and some workers have deliberately misled readers wherever possible to try to protect identities.

The dilemma is that the closer you get, the more difficult it is to be objective and protect the school.

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Appendix 1

THE CONTRIBUTION OF A POLICY OF STAFF MANAGEMENT TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

The purpose of this questionnaire is to give a view of the structure and organisation of the school at one particular moment. In a year's time the school could be a very different place, with different staff and different procedures for managing the school. A questionnaire by its nature can only capture a part of the picture, but it provides a rough baseline of information which will be supplemented as interviews are conducted during the year. A second questionnaire will be circulated to colleagues in two years to see if the school's structure and organisation has remained the same or has changed significantly. If staff are willing to co-operate, I propose to conduct follow-up interviews after that questionnaire has been circulated as well.

Please note that this questionnaire is anonymous. Any information you give will only be used in this research. Information which can be identified with an individual will not be reported or released to anyone without prior permission.

Most answers require ticks to be placed in the appropriate boxes. Some questions ask you to give a rank order. Instructions accompany every question.

You are invited to add any additional comments you wish to make to the right of the boxes or on the back page.

1. Position on staff: (Tick one box)

Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year Tutor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty Head	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Where do you receive information about day to day school arrangements from? (Number boxes in order of importance of source)

Staff Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year Tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty Heads	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noticeboards	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other

Please specify

Appendix 1

3. Do you regard the flow of information as: (tick one box)

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Adequate
- Less than adequate
- []
- []
- []
- []
- []

4. Whom do you regard as responsible for keeping you informed about day to day school arrangements?

5. Whom do you contact if you wish to alter the day to day school arrangements, e.g. by arranging a school trip? (Please rank 1-5 to 1-5 to show who you go to first, second etc.)

- Faculty Head
- Senior Staff
- Other Staff
- []
- []
- []
- Year Tutor
- Headteacher
- []
- []

6. If you wished to raise a question of general educational interest, e.g. the development of a new course in school, would you do so in: (please rank 1-8 to show who you would approach first, second etc.)

- In Faculty meetings
- With the Faculty Head
- In the staff room
- With Senior Staff
- []
- []
- []
- []
- In Year meetings
- With the Year Tutor
- With the Headteacher
- For discussion in middle management meetings
- []
- []
- []
- []

7. Faced with a crisis in the classroom, e.g. an outright refusal to work, would you turn to: (if you would take the matter to more than one member of staff, please rank 1-5 in order of approach, 1 first etc.)

- Headteacher
- Faculty Head
- Other
- Please specify
- []
- []
- Senior Staff
- Year Tutor
- []
- []

Appendix 1

8. Faced with a personal crisis that required time off work, e.g. a bereavement, would you go to: (Tick the appropriate box. If you would approach more than one member of staff, please rank in order of contact, 1-first etc.)

Headteacher	[]	Senior Staff	[]
Year Tutor	[]	Faculty Head	[]
Friend on the staff	[]		

9. If you were contemplating applying for a more senior position in another school, would you discuss your application with: (Tick the appropriate box. If you would approach more than one member of staff, please rank in order of importance you would attach to that advice. 1 - most important etc.)

Headteacher	[]	Senior Staff	[]
Year Tutor	[]	Faculty Head	[]
Colleagues	[]	Other	
		Please specify	

10. Who would you expect to advise you about your career development: (Tick the appropriate box. If you would expect more than one person to advise you, please rank advice in order of importance to you. 1 - more important etc.)

Headteacher	[]	Senior Staff	[]
Faculty Head	[]	Year Tutor	[]
Colleagues	[]	Other	
		Please specify	

11. In lesson breaks, do you spend most time: (Tick the appropriate box(es).)

Working	[]	With Year Staff	[]
In the staff room	[]	In your room	[]
With members of your Faculty	[]	Mixing socially	[]

12. Do you think the school is primarily geared to: (Tick one box)

Exams	[]
Social development	[]
Placing pupils in employment	[]
Other	
Please specify	

Appendix 1

13. How would you summarise the school's aims?

.....
.....
.....

14. Do you think the school is achieving its aims? (Tick one box)

With all children	[]
With most children	[]
With some children	[]
With few children	[]

15. What qualities in pupils is it most important to develop? Some possible answers are listed below. Please add any others you think are important and number the complete list in order of importance 1 - most important etc.

Self confidence	[]
The ability to mix	[]
Academic achievement	[]
Obtaining a good job	[]
Politeness	[]
Others (please specify)	
.....	[]
.....	[]
.....	[]

16. Would you describe your job satisfaction as: (Tick one box)

High	[]
Fair	[]
Low	[]

17. Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the school's structure? The comments may relate to the questions above or to aspects of the structure which you do not feel have been covered.

.....
.....
.....

Appendix 1

For Heads of Faculties, Heads of Years, and Senior Staff

1. Do you regard the Middle Management Meetings as: (Tick one box. If you think more than one view is correct, please rank your response in order of importance - 1 most important etc.)

- A body that formulates policy
- A consultative committee
- A means of communication of administrative detail
- []

[]

[]

2. Would you say that Middle Management Meetings have: (Tick one box)

- A lot of influence on the Head
- Some influence on the Head
- Little influence on the Head
- []

[]

[]

3. Would you say the Middle Management Meetings are dominated by: (Tick one box)

- The headteacher
- Faculty Heads
- No one in particular
- []

[]

[]
- The Senior Staff
- Year Tutors
- []

[]

4. If a decision has to be taken that directly affects your area of responsibility, would you: (Tick one box)

- Always be consulted personally
- Usually be consulted personally
- Sometimes be consulted personally
- Be consulted through Middle Management Meetings
- Be informed through Middle Management Meetings
- Other. Please specify
- []

[]

[]

[]

[]

5. If a decision has to be taken that affects your area of responsibility indirectly, would you: (Tick one box)

- Always be consulted personally
- Usually be consulted personally
- Sometimes be consulted personally
- Be consulted through Middle Management Meetings
- Be informed through Middle Management Meetings
- Other. Please specify.....
- []

[]

[]

[]

[]

Appendix 1

6. If a member of staff has to be appointed within your area of responsibility, would you expect to: (Tick appropriate box(es).)

Be asked your general opinion about the vacancy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help in the selection of candidates	<input type="checkbox"/>
Be present at the interview	<input type="checkbox"/>
Be asked your opinion of the candidates	<input type="checkbox"/>
Be asked which candidate you think should be appointed	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Do you regard the management of assistant staff as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think more than one member of staff has this responsibility, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.)

Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty Heads	<input type="checkbox"/>	Year Tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please specify.....	

8. Do you regard the maintenance of staff discipline as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.)

Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty Heads	<input type="checkbox"/>	Year Tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please specify.....	

9. Do you regard the development of staff skills and expertise as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.)

Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty Heads	<input type="checkbox"/>	Year Tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please specify.....	

10. Do you think the preparation of younger staff for promotion is the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.)

Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty Heads	<input type="checkbox"/>	Year Tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please specify.....	

11. Do you regard the dissemination of information about the school's policy as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.)

Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty Heads	<input type="checkbox"/>	Year Tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please specify	

Appendix 2

Questionnaire Analysis 1982

I conducted a survey of staff attitudes at Hillside, using a questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire is in Appendix 1. In analysing the responses I make a broad distinction between managers, i.e. the Senior Team, Year Tutors and Faculty Heads on the one hand, and assistant staff on the other because they have different access to school policy through Academic and Pastoral meetings. The Senior Team is made up of the Head, Deputy Heads and Senior Teachers.

q.1. Position on staff

Responses from staff were:

- 16 out of 32 assistant staff
- 5 out of 6 Year Tutors
- 3 out of 6 Heads of Faculty
- 2 out of 6 Senior Team

A total of 26 out of 50

q.2. Who do you receive information about day to day school arrangements from?:

Communication to assistant staff is perceived to be chiefly via noticeboards and staff meetings. Some staff clearly receive more information through personal contacts, either their Head of Faculty or Senior Team they know well.

q.3. Do you regard the flow of information as:
(Tick one box)

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Less than adequate	7	4	= 11
Adequate	5	4	= 9
Good	4	0	= 4
Very good	0	2	= 2

i.e. Most of the sample think the flow of information is adequate or less than adequate; only 25% see information flow as good or very good.

q.4. Whom do you regard as responsible for keeping you informed about day to day school arrangements?

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
J.J.	6	3	= 9
Head of Faculty	8	0	= 8
Head of Year	7	0	= 7
H.M./ Senior Team	4	9	= 13

A stratified view. Responsibility for communication is seen by assistants as belonging to J.J., (a member of staff with specific responsibility to manage communication), the Faculty Heads, and/or the Year Heads. All managers see the responsibility belonging to the Senior Team or managed by JJ for them.

Appendix 2

The responses show that the middle managers are clearly key communicators in the school structure.

q.5. Whom do you contact if you wish to alter the day to day school arrangements, e.g. by arranging a school trip? (please rank 1-5 to show who you go to first, second etc.)

The responses to this and following questions were scored with maximum points going to the first choice, down to one point for the last choice. The totals give an overview of the importance of different strata in the school structure.

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Head Teacher	49	55	= 104
Head of Faculty	55	41	= 96
Senior Team	38	28	= 66
Head of Year	35	20	= 55
Other	26	12	= 38

The answers show the importance of the Head of Faculty in the school structure: almost as many responses identify him/her as the person to approach as the Head. The primacy of the Head is to be expected; the closeness of the two asks other questions.

q.6 If you wished to raise a question of general educational interest, e.g. the development of a new course in school, would you do so in: (please rank 1-8 to show who you would approach first, second etc.) 1st = 8 etc.

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
With Head of Faculty	122	44	= 166
Faculty meetings	91	55	= 146
With Head	67	63	= 130
For discussion at MMM	54	55	= 109
Senior Team	61	34	= 95
Staffroom	43	37	= 80
With Head of Year	45	27	= 72
Year meetings	34	29	= 63

The Faculty is clearly the key area for the exchange of educational ideas: the year system is seen as a subordinate system, even by Heads of Year who opted to raise issues with Heads of Faculty. Stratification shows through in the relative numbers of staff who would approach the Head. The assistant staff preferred the Head of Faculty to the Head Teacher in a ratio of 2:1. Middle and senior managers preferred the Head in a ratio of 3:2.

q.7 Faced with a crisis in the classroom, e.g. an outright refusal to work, would you turn to: (if you would take the matter to more than one member of staff, please rank 1-5 in order of approach, 1 first etc.) 1st = 5 etc.

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Head of Year	45	32	= 77
Head of Faculty	55	21	= 76
Senior Team	26	15	= 41
Head Teacher	11	10	= 21

There is a clear difference here between assistant staff who almost without exception see the Head of Faculty as the first person to turn to, then the Head of Year. The responses of the managers, show a different picture with the Head of Year becoming a much more central

Appendix 2

figure. The managers, of course, include the Heads of Faculty, who couldn't really refer to themselves.

Other parts of the research show that the quality of the Head of Faculty has a very definite effect on the morale of staff in the faculty and the primacy of the Head of Faculty as key manager is further illustrated here.

q.8 Faced with a personal crisis that required time off work, e.g. a bereavement, would you go to: (Tick the appropriate box. If you would approach more than one member of staff, please rank in order of contact, 1-first etc.) 1st = 5 etc.

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Head Teacher	53	38	= 91
Head of Faculty	41	13	= 54
Senior Team	35	16	= 51
Friend	20	2	= 22
Head of Year	12	0	= 12

Despite information in the interview data about the Head being inaccessible, almost all staff would approach him for help over a personal crisis. In a sense the question leads to that response with the formality of requesting time off, but most staff would go to the Head at an early stage. Once again, the differences in perception of the Heads of Faculty and the Heads of Year are underlined.

q.9. If you were contemplating applying for a more senior position in another school, would you discuss your application with: (Tick the appropriate box. If you would approach more than one member of staff, please rank in order of importance you would attach to that advice. 1 - most important etc.) 1st = 5 etc.

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Head of Faculty	58	14	= 72
Head Teacher	32	34	= 66
Colleagues	45	11	= 56
Senior Team	15	7	= 22
Head of Year	13	0	= 13
Other	10	0	= 10

A highly stratified view. A significant number of assistant staff would seek advice from colleagues/friends and the Head of Faculty. The head scores very poorly, though, of course, he would be formally involved with references etc. At a more senior level, the Head quickly becomes the chief source of advice suggesting that the pattern of accessibility varies with seniority; further stratification.

q.10 Who would you expect to advise you about your career development: (Tick the appropriate box. If you would expect more than one person to advise you, please rank advice in order of importance to you. 1 - more important etc.) 1st = 5 etc.

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Head teacher	46	43	= 89
Head of Faculty	59	15	= 74
Senior Team	34	0	= 34
Colleagues	22	4	= 26
Head of Year	12	0	= 12

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Again the stratified nature of the school is seen, with many assistant staff turning to Head of Faculty, whilst most middle managers (some of whom, of course are Heads of Faculty) turn to the Head. Other members of the Senior Team are not referred to at all. This perhaps, raises again the question of the Head's accessibility to all levels of staff. The perception that he is inaccessible may be a stratified perception rather than a realistic assessment. Also worth a note is the low status of Heads of Year. No one really seems to value their advice.

q.11 In lesson breaks, do you spend most time: (Tick the appropriate box(es).)

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Working	11	9	= 20
With Faculty staff	8	2	= 10
In the staff room	8	1	= 9
In your room	6	3	= 9
Mixing socially	4	2	= 6
With Year Staff	0	0	= 0

This was not a good question, especially as there was the possibility of combination answers, e.g. mixing in the staffroom or working in your room. The general picture is of a staff who spend lesson breaks either working or with Faculty staff, either in the staff room or in Faculty offices. What the question does not address, because of the anonymity guarantee, is whether all the staff in Faculty A spend their breaks mixing socially in the staff room and all the staff in Faculty B spend all their breaks working alone in their rooms. I had not expected the school to show such Faculty solidarity, so the questionnaire was not designed to measure that!

What does seem clear is that the Faculty and the staff room are the two strong social units, significantly more so than the year team. From personal observation, I would conclude that two Faculties use the staff room regularly, whilst others hardly use it at all.

q.12 Do you think the school is primarily geared to: (Tick one box)

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Exams	13	7	= 20
Social development	1	0	= 1
Employment	1	2	= 3

Other suggestions:

Creating a good school image 1
A mixture of the above aims 2

A very clear view of the school's perceived purpose; an academic bias clearly shows, and is also reflected in the amount of time spent in meetings discussing academic matters. The view is unstratified; shared by staff at all levels.

q.13 How would you summarise the school's aims?

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Not clear	1	0	= 1
Good results and a good public image	9	3	= 12
Educating the "Whole Person"	5	6	= 11
Conformity	1	0	= 1

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Other suggestions:

To enable the Senior Team to survive with minimal stress.

One Faculty Head commented that the school's aims - to get pupils good exam results with as little bother to the school as possible - did not reflect his/her personal aims.

Again a stratified view. Managers see the aims more in terms of the 'whole individual' and preparation for the outside world, whilst more junior staff see the aims as relating to academic success, the criteria of a 'grammar school' type of conformist environment with little social development beyond conformity.

q.14 Do you think the school is achieving its aims? (Tick one box)

	Assistant staff	Managers	
All children	0	0	= 0
Most children	8	8	= 16
Some children	7	1	= 8
Few children	0	0	= 0

Again a stratified view. A clear majority of managers think the school is succeeding with most pupils; only just over half the assistant staff share this view, with a significant number thinking it is only successful with some children.

q.15 What qualities in pupils is it most important to develop? Some possible answers are listed below. Please add any others you think are important and number the complete list in order of importance 1 - most important etc. 1st = 5 etc.

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Self confidence	66	20	= 86
Mixing	43	15	= 58
Academic skills	47	11	= 58
Job preparation	38	4	= 42
Politeness	36	8	= 42

Fourteen other suggestions were put forward. The only one to attract several mentions was:

Sensitivity and consideration	26	13	= 39
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Self reliance and social awareness were each mentioned twice, all others only being mentioned by one respondent.

The question is interesting, because the managers are much less willing to list qualities. I was hoping to check the extent to which staffs' views of the aims of the school (q.13) was cross referenced by answers to this question. Answers to q.13 suggests that the overall aim of the school is academic success. Staffs' views of the important things the school should achieve is seen much more in terms of personal qualities and skills. The question also relates to a question in the interviews, which produced a very similar response.

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q.16 Would you describe your job satisfaction as: (Tick one box)

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
High	4	5	= 9
Fair	10	4	= 14
Low	2	1	= 3

The responses suggest that managers have more job satisfaction than assistant staff, but not entirely.

q.17 Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the school's structure? The comments may relate to the questions above or to aspects of the structure which you do not feel have been covered.

There were several comments from staff about areas of the school structure that needed attention:

Lack of leadership and confused senior management was mentioned by six assistant staff and two managers;

Poor communication was mentioned by four assistant staff;

Too complex a management structure was mentioned by three assistant staff.

Also mentioned by assistant staff were:

Inappropriate Curriculum	1
Poor promotion prospects	1
Lack of time	1

Middle and senior managers were asked to complete an additional sheet which dealt with their responsibilities.

q.1 Do you regard the Middle Management Meetings as: (Tick one box. If you think more than one view is correct, please rank your response in order of importance - 1 most important etc.)

To formulate policy	12
A consultative committee	22
A means of communication	5

Other suggestions:

a talking shop that repeats itself.

Clearly the perception is that the MMMs are consultative primarily, rather than a policy-making body, which contrasts with the Head's statements in the interview notes.

q.2 Would you say that Middle Management Meetings have: (Tick one box)

A lot of influence on the Head	4
Some influence	5
Little influence	1

There is general agreement that Middle Management Meetings influence the Head to some extent, but doubt about how much.

Appendix 2

q.3 Would you say the Middle Management Meetings are dominated by: (Tick one box)

Head Teacher	3
Head of Faculty	1
Senior Team	1
Head of Year	0
No one	5

A split vote, between no particular dominance, and dominance by the Head.

q.4 If a decision has to be taken that directly affects your area of responsibility, would you: (Tick one box)

Always be consulted personally	2
Usually be consulted personally	6
Sometimes be consulted personally	2
Be consulted through MMM	0
Be informed through MMM	1

Middle Management staff clearly expect to be consulted personally about decisions that affect their area of responsibility.

q.5 If a decision has to be taken that affects your area of responsibility indirectly, would you: (Tick one box)

Always be consulted personally	0
Usually be consulted personally	3
Sometimes be consulted personally	5
Be consulted through MMM	1
Be informed through MMM	0

Middle Management staff are sometimes consulted personally in decisions that indirectly affect their area of responsibility.

q.6 If a member of staff has to be appointed within your area of responsibility, would you expect to: (Tick appropriate box(es).)

Be asked your opinion about the vacancy	5
Help in the selection of candidates	5
Be present at the interview	6
Be asked your opinion of the candidates	7
Be asked which candidate you think should be appointed	6

There is a difference in response between Heads of Year, who clearly feel less involved, and Heads of Faculty and the Senior Team who expect to be involved at interview and appointment level. Whilst this in part reflects the balance of power and influence in the school, it is also a reflection of the realities of the salary structure, with most appointments being subject based.

Appendix 2

q.7 Do you regard the management of assistant staff as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think more than one member of staff has this responsibility, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.) 1st = 4 etc.

Head Teacher	25
Senior Team	22
Head of Faculty	29
Head of Year	13
Other	0

The management of assistant staff is seen as chiefly the responsibilities of the Head of Faculty and the Head. The Head of Year again is regarded as significantly less important.

q.8 Do you regard the maintenance of staff discipline as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.)

Head Teacher	37
Senior Team	22
Head of Faculty	25
Head of Year	5
Other	0

The interesting point is that the Head of Faculty is seen as having more responsibility for discipline than the Senior Team - deputies and senior teachers.

q.9 Do you regard the development of staff skills and expertise as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.)

Head Teacher	18
Senior Team	16
Head of Faculty	31
Head of Year	13
Other suggestions:	

I don't believe anyone holds this responsibility.
It should be part of the role of the member of staff responsible for staff welfare.

The primacy of the Head of Faculty as staff developer is clear. The question of a staff development policy across the whole school, and the problems that might arise with an ineffective Head of Faculty, covered in the interviews, need further thought.

q.10 Do you think the preparation of younger staff for promotion is the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.) 1st = 4 etc.

Head Teacher	10
Senior Team	14
Head of Faculty	36
Head of Year	12

Appendix 2

Other suggestions:

I don't believe anyone holds this responsibility.

Again, the primacy of the Head of Faculty is evident.

q.11 Do you regard the dissemination of information about the school's policy as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.) 1st = 4 etc.

Head Teacher	31
Senior Team	31
Head of Faculty	15
Head of Year	10

The Head of Faculty is seen as a figure of great importance in the decision making process, in appointments, in staff development and preparation for promotion, but the dissemination of information is seen as someone else's responsibility.

Questionnaire Analysis 1984

Answers from the previous survey are shown in brackets.

q.1 Position on staff

Responses from staff were:

- 17 (16) out of 32 assistant staff
- 4 (5) out of 6 Year Tutors
- 4 (3) out of 6 Heads of Faculty
- 3 (2) out of 6 Senior Team

A total of 28 (26) out of 50 (50)

q.2 Who do you receive information about day to day school arrangements from?:

Communication to assistant staff was still perceived to be chiefly via noticeboards, Heads of Year and Heads of Faculty, followed by the Senior Team. The importance of staff meetings has declined, probably due to industrial unrest. Managers get most of their information from the Senior Team or noticeboards.

q.3 Do you regard the flow of information as:
(Tick one box)

	Assistant Staff	Managers
Less than adequate	9 (7)	4 (4) = 13 (11)
Adequate	9 (5)	4 (4) = 13 (9)
Good	2 (4)	2 (0) = 4 (4)
Very good	0 (0)	1 (2) = 1 (2)
Excellent	1 (0)	0 (0) = 1 (0)

Appendix 2

There is a deterioration in satisfaction with the flow of information. Only 20% (25%) see information flow as good or very good. More respondents think information flow is poor than in the previous survey.

Two staff differentiated between faculty information, which they described as excellent, and general school information, which they described as less than adequate.

q.4 Whom do you regard as responsible for keeping you informed about day to day school arrangements?

	Assistant Staff	Managers
JJ.	0 (6)	0 (3) = 0 (9)
Head of Faculty	11 (8)	0 (0) = 11 (8)
Head of Year	8 (7)	1 (0) = 9 (7)
Head./Senior Team	11 (4)	11 (9) = 22 (13)

A considerable change from the last survey. The responsibility for communication that belonged to JJ, (a member of staff with specific responsibility to manage communication) has disappeared, and most staff now expect the head and the Senior Team to keep them informed. Assistant staff still look to Heads of Faculty and to a lesser extent, Heads of Year for information.

These responses show that the middle managers are less clearly the key communicators in the school structure, probably because the industrial action has stopped meetings, and their access to information on a regular and organised basis.

q.5 Whom do you contact if you wish to alter the day to day school arrangements, e.g. by arranging a school trip? (Please rank 1-5 to show who you go to first, second etc.)

The responses to this and following questions were scored with maximum points going to the first choice, down to one point for the last choice. The totals give an overview of the importance of different strata in the school structure. 1st = 5.

	Assistant Staff	Managers
Head Teacher	50 (49)	35 (55) = 85 (104)
Head of Faculty	73 (55)	31 (41) = 104 (96)
Senior Team	46 (38)	41 (28) = 89 (66)
Head of Year	45 (35)	18 (20) = 63 (55)
Other	17 (26)	12 (12) = 29 (36)

The answers show the importance of the Head of Faculty in the school structure has increased: more responses identify him/her as the person to approach than the Head. The Senior Team have a much stronger response than last time.

Appendix 2

q.6 If you wished to raise a question of general educational interest e.g. the development of a new course in school, would you do so in: Please rank 1-8 to show who you would approach first, second etc.

	Assistant staff	Managers
With Head of Faculty	133 (122)	41 (44)= 171 (166)
Faculty meetings	98 (91)	59 (55)= 157 (146)
With Head Teacher	67 (67)	67 (63)= 134 (130)
For discussion at MMM	47 (54)	48 (55)= 95 (109)
Senior Team	58 (61)	55 (34)= 113 (95)
Staffroom	34 (43)	26 (37)= 60 (80)
With Head of Year	58 (45)	27 (27)= 85 (72)
Year meetings	43 (34)	8 (29)= 51 (63)

The faculty is clearly still seen as the key area for the exchange of educational ideas. The importance of year meetings have declined. The Senior Team have gained ground and are now more widely consulted. Stratification, shown by the relative numbers of staff who would approach the Head, is largely unchanged from the previous survey.

q.7 Faced with a crisis in the classroom, e.g. an outright refusal to work, would you turn to: (if you would take the matter to more than one member of staff, please rank 1-5 in order of approach, 1 first etc.

	Assistant staff	Managers
Head of Year	42 (45)	27 (32) =69 (77)
Head of Faculty	63 (55)	20 (21) =83 (76)
Senior Team	28 (26)	21 (15) =49 (41)
Head Teacher	13 (11)	12 (10) =25 (21)

One respondent commented: "It is simply not done to have a crisis in the classroom at this school."

The clear difference between the perceptions of assistant staff and managers remains. The assistant staff almost without exception still regard the Head of Faculty as the first person to turn to, then the Head of Year. Once you look at the responses of managers, the picture changes, with the Head of Year becoming a much more central figure.

q.8 Faced with a personal crisis that required time off work, e.g. a bereavement, would you go to: (Tick the appropriate box. If you would approach more than one member of staff, please rank in order of contact, 1-first etc.) 1st = 5 etc.

	Assistant Staff	Managers
H.M.	58 (53)	51 (38) = 109 (91)
Head of Faculty	67 (41)	13 (13) = 80 (54)
Senior Team	54 (35)	23 (16) = 77 (51)
Friend	12 (20)	3 (2) = 15 (22)
Head of Year	18 (12)	2 (0) = 20 (12)

There is a slight change from the last survey, with an increase in the numbers of staff who would turn to the Senior Team and to Heads of Faculty.

Appendix 2

q.9. If you were contemplating applying for a more senior position in another school, would you discuss your application with: (Tick the appropriate box. If you would approach more than one member of staff, please rank in order of importance you would attach to that advice. 1 - most important etc.) 1st = 5etc.

	Assistant Staff		Managers	
Head of Faculty	75	(58)	14 (14)	= 89 (72)
Head Teacher	33	(32)	34 (34)	= 67 (66)
Colleagues	29	(45)	13 (11)	= 42 (56)
Senior Team	15	(15)	4 (7)	= 19 (22)
Head of Year	23	(13)	0 (0)	= 23 (13)
Other	0	(10)	0 (0)	= 0 (10)

Still a highly stratified view. The number of assistant staff who would seek advice from the Head of Faculty has increased. The Head of Year has gained in importance as a source of advice amongst assistant staff.

q.10 Who would you expect to advise you about your career development: (Tick the appropriate box. If you would expect more than one person to advise you, please rank advice in order of importance to you. 1 - more important etc.) 1st = 5 etc.

	Assistant Staff		Managers	
Head Teacher	44	(46)	40 (43)	= 84 (89)
Head of Faculty	71	(59)	16 (15)	= 87 (74)
Senior Team	23	(34)	16 (0)	= 39 (34)
Colleagues	16	(22)	0 (4)	= 16 (26)
Head of Year	22	(12)	2 (0)	= 24 (12)

Again the stratified nature of the school continues with significantly more assistant staff turning to Head of Faculty. Most middle managers turn to the Senior Team, especially the Head. The number asking the Senior Team has increased. The influence of Heads of Year, although still well down the list, has increased.

q.11 In lesson breaks, do you spend most time: (Tick the appropriate box(es).)

	Assistant Staff		Managers	
Working With Faculty members	9	(11)	10 (9)	= 19 (20)
In the staff room	4	(8)	4 (2)	= 8 (10)
In your room	10	(8)	0 (1)	= 10 (9)
Mixing socially	4	(6)	3 (3)	= 7 (9)
With Year Staff	5	(4)	0 (2)	= 5 (6)
	0	(0)	0 (0)	= 0 (0)

The general picture has changed slightly. Fewer staff spend lesson breaks either working or with Faculty members, slightly more in the staff room.

The Faculty is not so clearly the strong social unit it appeared in the first survey, though it is still significantly stronger than the Year. Evidence in the interviews talks of a break down of the school's social cohesion because of differing attitudes to industrial action.

Appendix 2

q.12 Do you think the school is primarily geared to: (Tick one box)

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Exams	13 (13)	10 (7)	= 23 (20)
Social development	1 (1)	1 (0)	= 2 (1)
Employment	1 (1)	1 (1)	= 2 (3)

Other suggestions:

Creating a good school image 1 (1)

There is very little change since the previous survey. The school's perceived purpose is unchanged; if anything the academic bias shows more clearly.

q.13 How would you summarise the school's aims?

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Not clear	0 (1)	0 (0)	= 0 (1)
Good results and a good public image	2 (9)	7 (3)	= 19 (12)
Educating the "Whole Person"	6 (5)	6 (6)	= 12 (11)
Conformity	4 (1)	1 (0)	= 5 (1)

No longer a stratified view. Managers now see the aims of the school in the same sort of terms as more junior staff. Academic success is seen as the dominant aim. The wider view of education is recognised as an aim by a higher proportion of managers.

q.14 Do you think the school is achieving its aims? (Tick one box)

	Assistant staff	Managers	
All children	0 (0)	0 (0)	= 0 (0)
Most children	7 (8)	6 (8)	= 13 (16)
Some children	5 (7)	2 (1)	= 7 (8)
Few children	0 (0)	1 (0)	= 1 (0)

The results are only marginally different from the last survey. It is still a stratified view. Some respondents missed parts of the last page of the questionnaire as they were new to the school and felt unable to comment, which is why the results for q 13-17 have different totals.

q.15 What qualities in pupils is it most important to develop? Some possible answers are listed below. Please add any others you think are important and number the complete list in order of importance 1 - most important etc. 1st = 5 etc.

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
Self confidence	44 (66)	24 (20)	= 68 (86)
Mixing	45 (43)	26 (15)	= 71 (58)
Academic skills	39 (47)	20 (11)	= 59 (58)
Job preparation	32 (38)	16 (4)	= 48 (42)
Politeness	23 (36)	7 (8)	= 30 (42)

Appendix 2

Twelve other suggestions were put forward. The only one to attract several mentions was:

Social Responsibility	4	18	= 22
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Understanding was mentioned twice, all others only being mentioned by one respondent.

The only change worth noting is the increase in emphasis by managers on social rather than academic skills, whilst assistant staff now seem to see this as less important.

q.16 Would you describe your job satisfaction as: (Tick one box)

	Assistant Staff	Managers	
High	1 (4)	6 (5)	= 7 (9)
Fair	13 (10)	3 (4)	= 16 (14)
Low	4 (2)	1 (1)	= 5 (3)

This survey shows a change in the staff's job satisfaction. I commented in the previous survey that the responses suggested that managers had more job satisfaction than assistant staff, but not entirely. Now it seems to be much more clearly the case that the more senior you are, the better your job satisfaction, with the notable exception of one quite senior member of staff who described his satisfaction as low, and showed a lot of negative responses in the rest of the survey.

q.17 Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the school's structure? The comments may relate to the questions above or to aspects of the structure which you do not feel have been covered.

There were several comments from staff about areas of the school structure that needed attention:

Lack of leadership and confused senior management was mentioned by 4 (6) assistant staff and 2 (2) managers;

Poor communication was mentioned by 3 (4) assistant staff and 1 (0) member of managers;

Too complex a management structure was mentioned by 0 (3) assistant staff.

Also mentioned by assistant staff were:

Inappropriate Curriculum	3 (1)
Poor promotion prospects	2 (1)
Overwork	2 (Lack of time 1)
Lack of democracy/consultation.	1

(This during a period of industrial action when normal after school meetings were almost all cancelled).

Appendix 2

Managers were asked to complete an additional sheet which dealt with middle and senior management responsibilities.

q.1 Do you regard the Middle Management Meetings as: (Tick one box. If you think more than one view is correct, please rank your response in order of importance 1 - most important etc.)

To formulate policy	15 (12)
A consultative committee	22 (22)
A means of communication	14 (5)

The increase in the responses to the communication answer may reflect the Head's desire to manage things more strongly, (see interview notes) or may reflect the onset of industrial action. I think the first explanation is probably correct.

q.2 Would you say that Middle Management Meetings have: (Tick one box)

A lot of influence on the Head	3 (4)
Some influence	6 (5)
Little influence	2 (1)

There is general agreement that Middle Management Meetings influence the Head to some extent, but doubt about how much. The responses show little change from the last survey.

q.3 Would you say the Middle Management Meetings are dominated by: (Tick one box)

Head Teacher	4 (3)
Head of Faculty	1 (1)
Senior Team	0 (1)
Head of Year	1 (0)
No one	6 (5)

A split vote, between no particular dominance, and dominance by the Head. Again, there is little change since the last survey.

q.4 If a decision has to be taken that directly affects your area of responsibility, would you: (Tick one box)

Always be consulted personally	1 (2)
Usually be consulted personally	6 (6)
Sometimes be consulted personally	1 (2)
Be consulted through MMM	1 (0)
Be informed through MMM	0 (1)

Two Heads of Year and one Senior Team member of staff said they would not usually expect to be consulted at all, perhaps reflecting their growing estrangement. Other Middle Management staff recorded little change. They still expect to be consulted personally about decisions that affect their area of responsibility.

Appendix 2

q.5 If a decision has to be taken that affects your area of responsibility indirectly, would you: (Tick one box)

Always be consulted personally	0 (0)
Usually be consulted personally	2 (3)
Sometimes be consulted personally	3 (5)
Be consulted through MMM	5 (1)
Be informed through MMM	0 (0)

The increase in consultation through Middle Management Meetings perhaps reflects the change in the nature of the meetings described by the Headteacher in interview notes.

q.6 If a member of staff has to be appointed within your area of responsibility, would you expect to: (Tick appropriate box(es).)

Be asked your opinion about the vacancy	7 (5)
Help in the selection of candidates	6 (5)
Be present at the interview	7 (6)
Be asked your opinion of the candidates	6 (7)
Be asked which candidate you think should be appointed	7 (6)

There is slightly more involvement of staff in the appointment of colleagues than in the previous survey.

q.7 Do you regard the management of assistant staff as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think more than one member of staff has this responsibility, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.) 1st = 4 etc.

Head Teacher	26 (25)
Senior Team	23 (22)
Head of Faculty	28 (29)
Head of Year	10 (13)
Other	1 (0)

One of the deputies said that he thought the responsibility was shared between the Head and the Deputies.

There has been little change since the last survey.

q.8 Do you regard the maintenance of staff discipline as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.)

Head Teacher	34 (37)
Senior Team	24 (22)
Head of Faculty	19 (25)
Head of Year	7 (5)
Other	0 (0)

There is a change between this survey and the last one. The Senior Team now are seen as having a more significant role. Last time the Head of Faculty was seen as having more responsibility for discipline than the Senior Team. This is no longer the case. One explanation might be that the period of industrial action has polarised staff into 'management' and 'other'

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staff, with some of the responsibilities that Heads of Faculty had assumed being handed back. Another possibility is that the Head's planned restructuring of the senior management has brought about a change in the leadership of the school.

q.9 Do you regard the development of staff skills and expertise as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.)

Head Teacher	19 (18)
Senior Team	27 (16)
Head of Faculty	33 (31)
Head of Year	5 (13)
Other:	0 (2)

In the last survey, the primacy of the Head of Faculty as staff developer was clear. Now the situation has changed. The re-formed Senior Team are involved in staff development to a much greater extent than before. The Heads of Year are regarded as significantly less important in this area.

q.10 Do you think the preparation of younger staff for promotion is the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.) 1st = 4 etc.

Head Teacher	18 (10)
Senior Team	21 (14)
Head of Faculty	36 (36)
Head of Year	11 (12)
Other:	0 (1)

The primacy of the Head of Faculty is evident, as in the previous survey, but again, the role of the Senior Team has increased considerably.

q.11 Do you regard the dissemination of information about the school's policy as the responsibility of: (Tick one box. If you think this responsibility is shared by more than one member of staff, please number your responses, 1 - most responsible etc.) 1st = 4 etc.

Head Teacher	39 (31)
Senior Team	32 (31)
Head of Faculty	12 (15)
Head of Year	7 (10)

There is little change from the first survey, I commented then that the Head of Faculty was seen as a figure of great importance in the decision making process, in appointments, in staff development and preparation for promotion, but the dissemination of information was seen as someone else's responsibility. That is more definitely so in this survey, with the Head expected to do more, and the Head of Faculty less. I suspect this is another example of polarisation of responsibility because of industrial action. The cancellation of meetings means management has to decide and promulgate to a greater extent than before.

Conclusions

1. The role of the Head of Year has declined. A possible explanation for this lies in the fact that the Heads of Year' responsibilities are to do with management of children at breaks and lunchtimes. A period of industrial action which insists on staff spending breaks away from

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the children is more likely to affect the Heads of Year than anyone else. In the same way, the cutting away of 'other' duties like meetings gives Heads of Faculty more time to concentrate on their academic work.

2. The role of the Senior Team has increased, and they are seen as having a greater influence than in the last survey. As the Head planned to restructure the team, his management changes appear to have worked to some extent.

Appendix 3

The Interview Questions

1. What do you think is the main purpose of education?
2. Do you discuss the aims of education in school?
3. How does the machinery of consultation work in the school?
4. Are members of staff able to influence school policy?
5. Should all members of staff be able to influence school policy?
6. Should the senior staff have the most significant influence on the school's policy?
7. How do the views of the assistant staff reach the Head?
8. Do you know what the stated aims of the school are?
9. Would you agree, in general terms, with these aims?
10. Do you think the stated aims of the school accurately reflect what is going on in the school?
11. What part did you play in the formulation of the school's aims?
12. Do you think that the school's policy document needs to be revised?
Who do you think should do this?
13. Have you been involved in any changes of policy within your faculty recently?
What were the changes? How did they come about?
14. What do you understand by the concept of accountability in education?
Are you accountable? To whom?
15. Is accountability desirable?
16. How would you describe the level of staff morale at the moment?
17. Is the level of staff morale most affected by events involving the children, or events involving other staff?
18. How does the system of pastoral care of staff work?
Is a system of pastoral care of staff necessary?
How could it be improved?
19. How do you see the pastoral care of staff in relation to a policy of staff development?
20. How would you rate your job satisfaction?
Could your job satisfaction be improved? How?
21. Is there anything else you would like to say?
22. How would you compare the school now with three years ago?

Appendix 4

The Pink Paper

To all members of staff

Timetable 1986/87

In the continuing absence of opportunities at staff meetings to debate possible future timetabling developments, I have gathered together a few thoughts that colleagues might care to consider in relation to next year's timetable.

1. All the planning and INSET arrangements for the introduction of GCSE pre-suppose a September start. Perhaps we should therefore break with our tradition of starting the new timetable immediately after Whitsun, at least for this year.
2. The demands made by GCSE will vary from one area of the curriculum to another but will also differ from the present demands of O-level and CSE. Some subjects will disappear altogether.
3. The popularity of the new EFL course is creating a pressure all of its own, but of a quite different nature from that of GCSE. Should we expand the course to include Careers, Health etc and make it part of every pupil's programme?
4. I am concerned that the tutorial time between 8:50am and 9:20am is not as profitably used by some pupils/staff as it might be. If it is not going to be used for active tutorial work it could perhaps be better employed in the curriculum area.
5. With GCSE being taken by pupils at the end of year 5, our normal sequence of CSE in the fifth year followed by GCE in the 6th will no longer be possible. We have, therefore, to rethink our 6th form strategy if we wish to encourage pupils to return for an extra year.
6. Should we, for example, encourage stronger links with the college to bring more pre-vocational training into our 6th form provision? Or should we devise our own CPVE course?
7. Alternatively we could encourage the development of local inter-school consortia to widen the range and nature of subjects we offer at 6th form level.
8. It has been suggested in the past, and re-suggested recently, that we should consider altering our timetabled day in order to reduce the length of our teaching periods and also to make more time for some areas of the curriculum, especially where faculties feel that at present their time allocation is insufficient for what they are trying to do.
9. A possible reconstruction might be:

Timings:	8:50	Registration
	8:55	P.1
	9:55	Changeover
	10:00	P.2
	11:00	Break
	11:15	P.3
	12.15	Lunch
	1:10	Registration
	1.15	P.4
	2:15	Changeover
	2:20	P.5
	3:20	End of School

Questions here: What about tutorial work?
 What about assemblies? Any ideas?
 Effect upon the role of Head of Year?

Timetable:

Yr	E	M	H	D	PE	SC	ML	Options
6	3	3	3	3	2	3		1x3p = 20p
Maximum 6 exam subjects + 1 whole day at college.								
5	4	3	3	3	3	3		2x3p = 25p
4	4	3	3	3	3	3		2x3p = 25p
Maximum 8 exam subjects + Spanish/Music.								
3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	= 25p
2	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	= 25p
1	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	= 25p

The staffing demands of the suggestion could be met without too much difficulty from our present resources, although there might be a slight change in the balance here and there.

I should welcome the reactions of all colleagues on the issues raised here. Please make your points in writing, preferably within the next fortnight.